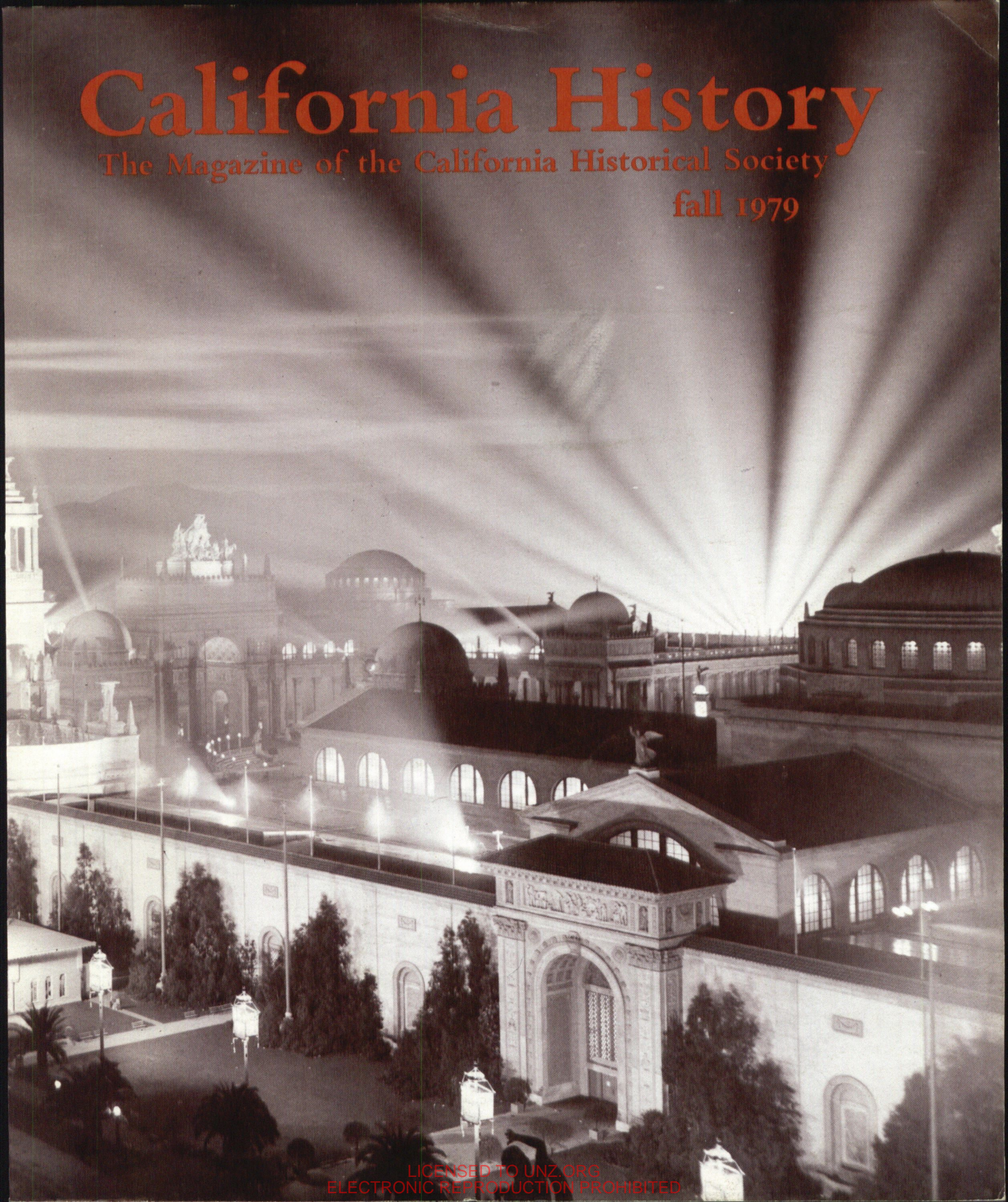


California History

The Magazine of the California Historical Society

fall 1979



THE CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, founded in 1871, preserves historical source materials and facilitates their use by both scholars and laymen. The Society's publications, programs, and library services seek to stimulate interest in the historical events and ideas that continue to shape life in California today. Membership is open to all.

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COVER

Lighting created a mood of glamorous excitement at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915. Marking the national Centennial of Light in 1979, California also celebrates its own contribution to the development of electric lighting—the central generating station which distributed electricity to customers' premises. For this story, turn to the article beginning on page 234. *California Historical Society*.

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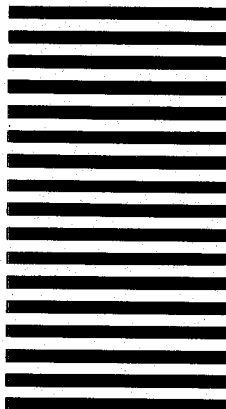
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California History

The Magazine of the California Historical Society

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Virginia City's volunteer firemen proudly posed for Weed's camera on July 4, 1862. The resulting image of patriotic solidarity is probably Nevada's first photographic print on paper.

CALIFORNIA'S PERIPATETIC PHOTOGRAPHER

Charles Leander Weed

California's image as a natural paradise began with the early explorers who returned home with incredible tales of the land's rugged beauty. Wherever they journeyed, sailors and trappers quickly spread their stories far and wide. In their poignant letters and diaries, the California Argonauts of the mid-nineteenth century only served to amplify the developing legend. Soon, aroused and curious armchair travelers demanded pictorial confirmation—sketches, paintings, and the best record of all, photographs—of the seemingly exaggerated and unreal California marvels.

Not surprisingly, however, the earliest California “sun artists” who accompanied the gold rush focused mainly on the likenesses of the men and women in the midst of the great adventure. Almost without exception, outdoor photographs from Forty-niner days reflect only man-centered places—mines, homesteads, towns. The landscape itself remained largely undocumented until the 1860s, perhaps because the very business of survival demanded that man brand the awesome, possibly hostile terrain with his mark before he rest and contemplate the poetry of the land itself.

Following close on the heels of the traveling artists who painted pictures of the countryside, several daguerrean operators attempted to capture the essence of the California mystique for curious easterners. In 1851, for instance, Robert H. Vance produced a series of 300 daguerreotypes depicting the California frontier. In the same year, John Wesley Jones ambitiously set out to complete a series of 1500 daguerreotypes showing every prominent geographical feature between the Pacific Ocean and the Missouri River! Daguerreotypes, however, were one-of-a-kind images which could not be duplicated for wide distribution and ownership. Not until the introduction of the new collodion wet-plate process could relatively inexpensive negatives be made for producing multiple photographs on paper. This important development made it possible to bring nature (and almost anything else) to viewers “back home.”

Accordingly, the photographic business itself underwent a radical change. Itinerant photographers were soon superseded by businessmen who owned and operated galleries for profit. These men hired photographers and production staffs, and the artists behind the published or mass-produced photo-

graphs became increasingly anonymous. Charles Leander Weed was one of these largely overlooked artists—a brilliant photographer of the California landscape whose rediscovered photographic works will earn him a lasting place in the history of American photography.

Western photography of the nineteenth century has recently garnered news headlines. *Newsweek* and the *New York Times*, among others, devoted a significant amount of space to a recent auction of early-day landscape photography. The reason? A single album of California views by Carleton E. Watkins fetched \$100,000. Such men as Watkins and Eadweard J. Muybridge have achieved international acclaim for their magnificent photographs. Today their images are scarce and deservedly valuable, yet their works are not nearly as rare as those of another photographer of the California terrain.

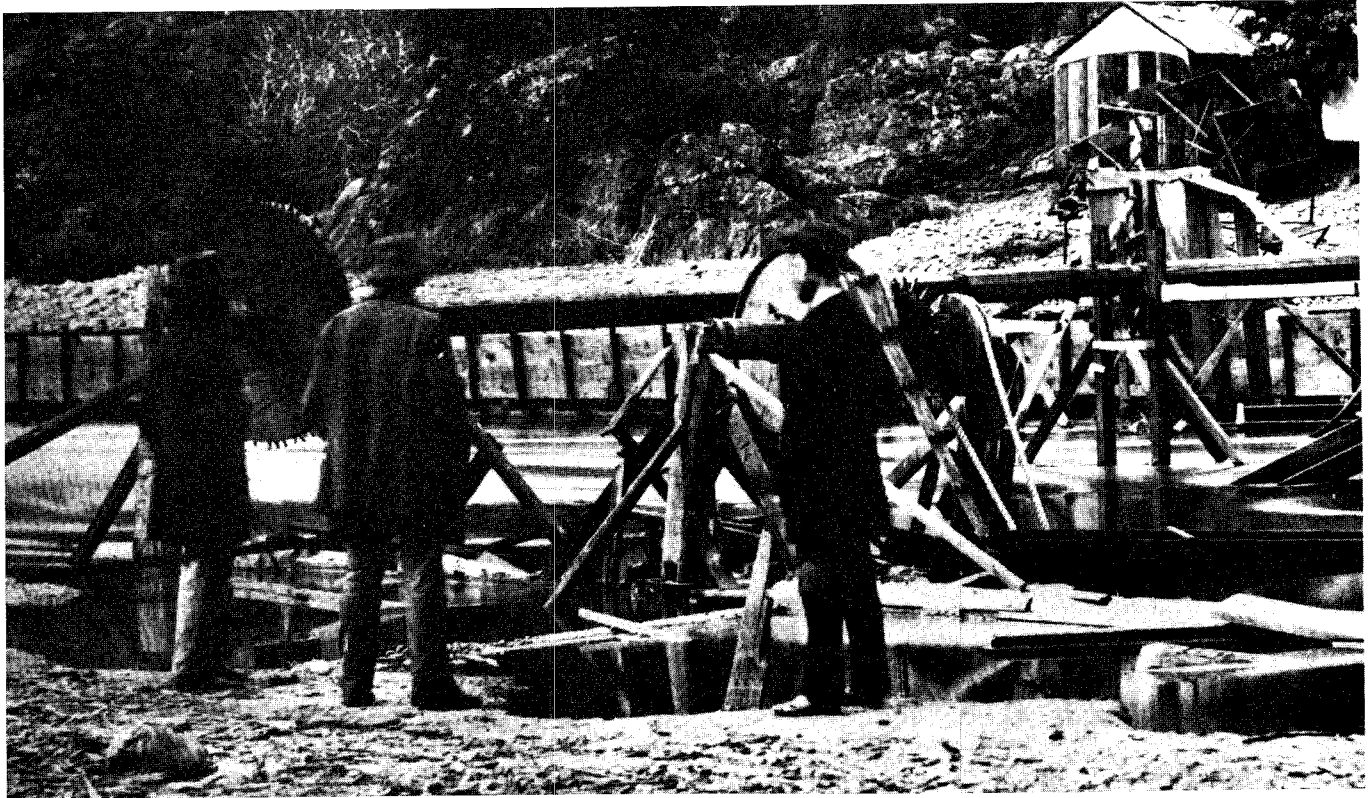
On a sunny morning 120 years ago, a photographer named Charles Leander Weed produced the “first ever” photograph of Yosemite Valley’s scenic splendors. “Magnificent, wonderful, excellent . . .,” praised critics and public alike, seemingly assuring Weed’s further artistic success and reputation. Yet, Weed appeared hardly to notice his many admirers or to try to increase his reputation, for within a few months he had jumped into a totally new and more ambitious camera adventure in the Orient.

Weed’s remarkable journey to establish a photographic gallery in Hong Kong in 1860 was only one in a string of noteworthy photographic achievements garnered by this unheralded man. In 1858, for example, Weed appears to have been the first photographer to use the new collodion wet-plate process to produce paper prints of rural California. The result was a series of rare mining views on the rugged and remote American River. While in Yosemite in 1859, Weed was probably the first image-

Peter Palmquist is the author of several books and articles on early California photographers. His study of Carleton Watkins’ career as a publisher of photographs appeared in the Fall, 1978, issue of *California History* devoted to Watkins. He is employed as a photographer at Humboldt State University, Arcata, California.

The section of the article on Weed’s activities in Hawaii has been written by Lynn Davis, Photo Librarian at the Bernice P. Bishop Museum in Honolulu, and Susan Shaner, Archivist, Hawaii State Archives in Honolulu.

The man standing on the right on the American River sandbar may well be Weed. As professional men, photographers usually wore formal attire in the wilderness. An assistant brought along on the expedition to help make the large-plate images could have taken the photograph.

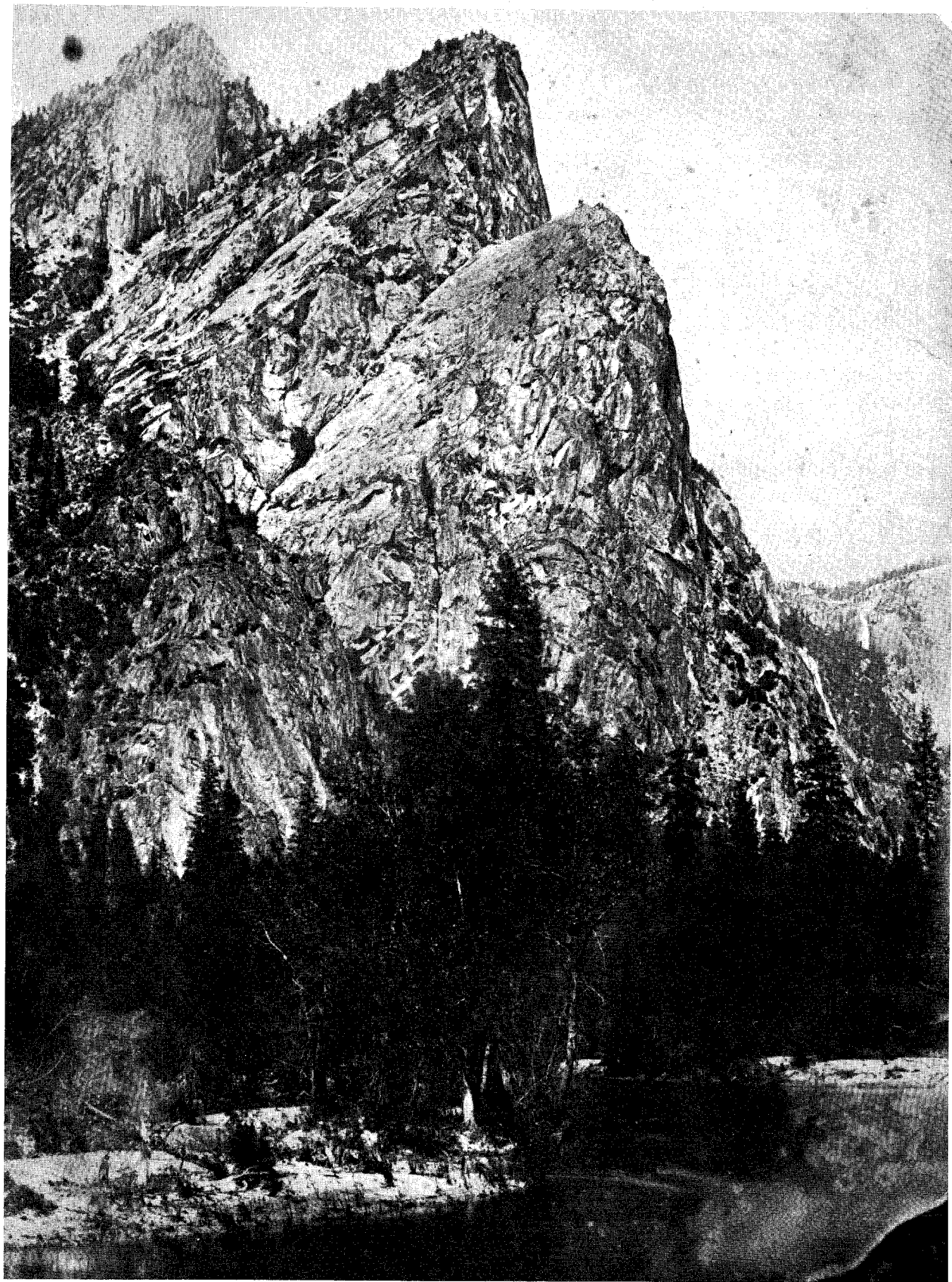


maker to make wet-plate stereographs in the Golden State. Similarly, in 1862 Weed may well have been the earliest to take large-size wet-plate views of the mining regions of Nevada.

Weed's 1864 mammoth-plate views (approximately 18" x 21") of Yosemite won the international award for landscape photography at the 1867 Paris Exposition. (The famed Carleton Watkins did not win a prize until the following year.) In 1865 Weed also gained the distinction of being the first artist to produce mammoth-plate photographs of the Hawaiian Islands, including three views of the magnificent volcanic crater of Haleakala on Maui. In addition, on this same visit in Hawaii, he also made an unprecedented series of mammoth-plate portraits. In 1860 and again during the period 1866 to

1869, Weed became one of the very few westerners able to establish a working photography business in the Far East under conditions which were often hostile to foreigners.

Startling as these accomplishments may seem, many of them have gone unrecognized by historians of the development of photography. Throughout a career that spanned several continents and more than forty years, Weed quietly and quickly produced photographs in a wide range of common and uncommon settings in places as diverse as Singapore and Red Bluff, California. Although he pioneered what might be considered the genre of Yosemite photographs, he has been far overshadowed by California's more famous landscape photographers, Watkins and Muybridge. Ironically, some of



This image of Yosemite's Three Brothers reflects Weed's early personal style as well as the approach favored by early landscape photographers.

Weed's views of Yosemite have in fact been intermingled with the works of the two giants.

Some twenty years have passed since researchers Mary and Bill Hood discovered a long-neglected series of photographs in the Yosemite Park Museum and undertook to reconstruct the circumstances of their origin. The Hoods' painstaking work and sharp insights led to identification of Weed's 1858 American River Series and proof of his seminal Yosemite work of 1859.

Recently, other scholars have supplied significant pieces to the puzzle of Weed's career: Clark Worswick's discovery of Weed's sojourn in Hong Kong, Singapore, and other places in the Far East; Lynn Davis and Susan Shaner's recognition of Weed's mammoth-plate views of Maui (see below); Paul T. Shafer's identification of the addresses and associations of yesterday's peripatetic photographers; and Pauline Grenbeaux, Nanette Sexton, Jack Gyer, Eldon Gruppe, and many others' efforts to distinguish Weed's works from those of other pioneer photographers.

Because of the relatively few original works which are firmly known to be Weed's, the process of establishing his pictorial legacy has been difficult. Weed did not commonly sign or otherwise identify his prints, nor did he advertise his activities as avidly as his contemporaries. He also appears to have been reticent to exploit his accomplishments, a failing which has been compounded by some historians' dismissal of Weed's photographs as technically poor or artistically primitive. Nevertheless, while Weed's landscape views may lack the perfection of Watkins or Muybridge at their best, Weed deserves considerable credit for his pioneering photographic efforts.

The search for information about Weed's life is far from finished. For example, little is known of Weed's life prior to his arrival in California. Born in New York state on July 17, 1824,¹ he probably moved to Wisconsin at an early age, where he remained until traveling west. He may have journeyed overland to California.

By the winter of 1854, Weed was firmly established at

66 J Street in Sacramento where he worked as a camera operator for daguerrean George W. Watson. Watson had recently acquired these premises from James M. Ford, another pioneer daguerrean who had traveled west in 1849. At approximately the same time that Weed joined Watson, the firm expanded into Henry W. Bradley's recently vacated daguerrean rooms next door at 68 J Street.²

Watson and Weed specialized in portrait photography. With immodesty typical of the times, the firm boasted that its new rooms and large north skylight would insure its patrons "a perfect likeness, possessing all the brilliancy of tone and lifelike expression of the eye, giving boldness and roundness to the features like a beautiful painting on ivory."³

By February, 1858, Watson's gallery had been taken over by another pioneer photographer, William Shew. Meanwhile, Weed had become allied with Robert H. Vance's new ambrotype gallery in the Hiller & Andrews' Building at the northeast corner of Third and J streets. Although Vance had established himself in Sacramento as early as June, 1852, this gallery was subordinate to his principal location on Montgomery Street in San Francisco. An effective entrepreneur, Vance was deservedly known as California's foremost daguerrean during the 1850s.⁴

Weed became Vance's junior partner and manager of the Sacramento operation. Opened as "Vance & Co.," it soon became known as "Vance & Weed."⁵ Its first advertisement in the *Sacramento Union* reflects Vance's well-known self-promotional skills: "We Challenge the World to beat the Premium Daguerreotypes and Photographs we are now producing at our rooms daily."⁶ Vance & Weed's offerings included "Cutting's Ambrotype Process," in which the photographic image was sealed between two pieces of glass to render the image waterproof. Vance prided himself on being first to introduce new photographic processes and techniques in California.

Vance's Branch---New Gallery.

AMBROTYPES,
PHOTOGRAPHS, DAGUERREOTYPES AND MELAINOTYPES.

VANCE & CO.,
N. E. Corner J and Third Streets,
[Hiller & Andrews' Building.]
SACRAMENTO,

Having fitted up a large suite of Rooms at the above place, in a manner unsurpassed in the State for richness of fittings, accommodations for visitors, and arrangement of lights, are now prepared to take any of the above styles of Pictures at 25 per cent. less than our former prices, and 100 per cent. better than can be obtained elsewhere in this city. Being the owners of JAMES A. CUTTING'S PATENT RIGHT for atmospherically sealing Ambrotypes, we shall give our patrons the

Genuine Patent Ambrotypes

Which, since their introduction at our establishment in San Francisco, have gained such popularity. We shall also take, as usual, our

PREMIUM DAGUERREOTYPES!

And PHOTOGRAPHS, as heretofore, in a manner unsurpassed anywhere.

The genuine Ambrotype is cemented between two glasses; and as there is no space between them, no dampness can collect.

With prompt attention and good work, we trust to meet here with the success we have had in San Francisco. We invite all to call and see our rooms and specimens, whether in want of Pictures or not.

VANCE & CO.,
San Francisco and Sacramento.

Although Vance & Weed worked well together, growing competition with other galleries and Vance's other interests (including real estate investments) probably began to inhibit the firm's development. Therefore, the partners moved to introduce another significant development to buttress Vance's business claim, "always something new." The resulting new contribution capitalized on Vance's recent experiment with colloidal wet-plate glass negatives to make prints on "salt" paper.⁷

Paper prints were not completely new in California. At the California State Fair in 1855, for instance, J. W. Johnston had won a special premium for "magnificent photographic portraits on paper."⁸ The following year, George Robinson Fardon utilized the process to produce a fine series of buildings and street scenes in San Fran-

Weed made images for Vance when this advertisement for Vance's Sacramento and San Francisco galleries appeared in the San Francisco City Directory.

cisco.⁹ Nonetheless, the wet-plate paper print procedure had rarely been used outside city studios or taken into rural California. Accordingly, Vance obtained a large wet-plate camera and charged Weed with the responsibility of taking the equipment into the field. It was an inspired assignment.

In October, 1858, Weed traveled up the Middle Fork of the American River to photograph river mining scenes, penetrating the wilderness as far as the community of Forest Hill, some fifteen miles from Auburn.¹⁰ Vance most likely sponsored this excursion with the expectation of gaining a striking display of California mining scenes for his San Francisco showrooms. Perhaps the great acclaim garnered earlier that year by James M. Hutchings' publication, *The Miners' Own Book: California Mining, Containing Correct Illustrations and Descriptions of the Various Modes of California Mining*, provided the impetus for the Vance-Weed expedition.

As editor and publisher of *Hutchings' California Magazine*, Hutchings approached the wonders of the California environment with missionary zeal. Like Vance, he believed that quality images of California would be well received, particularly in the East. Possibly Vance set out to prove that on-site photography would offer much greater accuracy than the fanciful images made by Hutchings' "sketch" artists and be commercially successful as well.¹¹

To the photographer's certain dismay, however, the twenty-odd views which comprised Weed's American River series did not receive more than a modicum of public attention. Shortly before Weed returned from his expedition, Vance's San Francisco gallery suffered a disastrous fire.¹² Because Vance had no other suitable display space for the American River "panorama," its showing was greatly delayed.

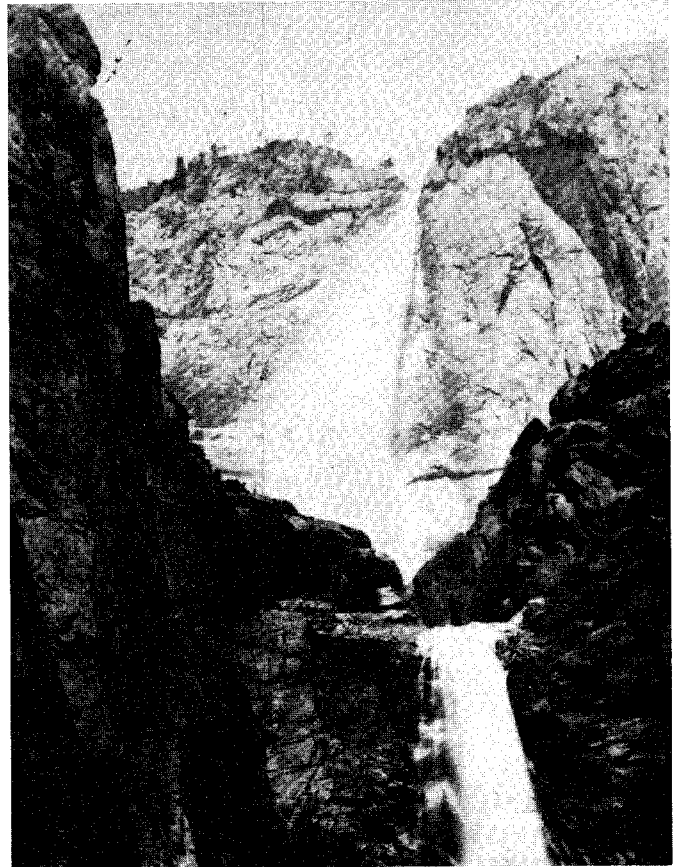
Although Weed's American River series failed to gain public attention, a few observers were moved to comment on the exhibition. Publicist and artist Edward Vischer, for example, reflected in 1859 that "rich material for observation is offered in the photographic views of the American River region exhibited in Vance's [Weed's] Panorama. Similar photographs of other mining regions would complete a picture gallery, the inspection of which would almost be a substitute for a visit to the places themselves."¹³

During the spring of 1859, Weed moved to San Francisco to assist with the re-opening of Vance's newly-refurbished studio.¹⁴ Eager to expand what he had begun, he continued his outdoor expeditions from his San Francisco base. In June of that year—probably on the basis of the little-known but important American River views—Weed was asked by Hutchings to accompany him to Yosemite. Mary Hood, chronicler of Weed's activity in Yosemite, explains that Hutchings was invited to attend the grand opening of the first two-story hotel in Yosemite so that he could produce a series of illustrated articles for his magazine. As part of the promotion, Weed was to make a "Yosemite Panorama" consisting of 10" x 14" photographs which would be added to the Vance firm's inventory and also serve as the basis for engravings in Hutchings' articles. According to Hood, Weed "covered the floor of the valley and took his heavy equipment to the base of Nevada and Illilouette Falls."¹⁵

Although Hutchings later wrote copiously about the journey, he never mentioned Weed by name. He did, however, discuss the equipment of the accompanying photographer: "The reader would have laughed could he have seen us ready for the start. Mr. Beardsley, who had volunteered to carry the camera, had it inverted and strapped at his back, where it looked more like an Italian 'hurdy-gurdy' than a photographic instrument. . . . Another carried the stereoscopic instrument and the lunch; another, the plate-holders and gun."¹⁶

After many calculations and observations, researchers

This view of Yosemite Falls made by Weed in June, 1859, is the first known photograph of the Yosemite area.



have concluded that the first photograph to be taken in Yosemite, one of the most photographed natural settings in the world, occurred at 11:25 A.M. on June 18, 1859, by Charles L. Weed.¹⁷ Fittingly, Weed selected for his initial subject 2,500-foot Yosemite Falls, described in Hutchings' rapturous words as "an indescribable sight . . . [which] rushes over the cliffs, and with one bold leap falls 1200 feet, then a second of 500 feet more, then a third of over 500 feet more. . . ."¹⁸ By the time of the conclusion of his historic visit to Yosemite's wonders, Weed had produced at least twenty large glass-plate negatives and forty stereo views.¹⁹

Within a few days of Weed's return to San Francisco,

Weed's view of Yosemite Falls provided the visual information for the engraving printed on the cover of Hutchings's Magazine.

his Yosemite stereographs became a featured attraction at Vance's establishment. Reporting the occasion, the *San Francisco Times* observed,

Mr. C. L. Weed, one of the most accomplished daguerrean and photographic artists in America, has just returned from a visit to the Yosemite Valley where he took, for Mr. Vance, some forty stereoscopic views of that celebrated locality. The views are arranged within the machine [probably a Becker-style stereo device] so that the observer by simply turning a screw on the outside has them placed successively before him. Every important place about the valley, the giant cliffs, the huge pines, the memorable waterfalls and cataracts, and in fact all but the reality is vividly depicted. . . . Each tree, rock, sprig, and cliff seems to stand out boldly and clearly. The great waterfalls, glistening in the sunlight, are seen leaping out from the crags and hang in mid air as clearly as if witnessed in nature. The views have been judiciously taken, are admirable specimens of the art, and may be seen at Vance's Photographic Gallery, corner of Montgomery and California Streets.²⁰

A short time later, the larger views which Weed had taken in Yosemite were likewise assembled into a gala display which the *San Francisco Times* headlined: "Ho! for Yo-Semite Valley. A magnificent Photographic Parnorama of the Great YoSemite Valley, with its immense Waterfalls, Cascades, Cataracts, Etc., in all their wild mountain grandeur, with scenes in the Mariposa grove of Mammoth Trees, etc., etc., can now been seen, free of charge, at Vance's Photographic Gallery."²¹

In the meantime, Hutchings' artists rendered engravings of Weed's Yosemite images for a series of articles entitled "The Great Yo-Semite Valley" which appeared in *Hutchings' California Magazine*.²² Mary Hood has suggested that in these articles the engravings attributed to Weed are made from his large prints, the smaller plates with rounded corners from his stereo views, and the remainder directly from other artist's sketches.²³

Weed's 1859 Yosemite views continued to be used by Hutchings for many years.²⁴ Ordinarily, Hutchings credited the photographs to Weed, but later versions read

HUTCHINGS' CALIFORNIA MAGAZINE.

VOL. IV. OCTOBER, 1859. No. 4.

THE GREAT YO-SEMITE VALLEY.

CHAPTER I.

How it came to be Discovered.
"I see you stand like grayhounds in the slips, Straining upon the start. The game 's a foot; Follow your spirit; and, upon this charge, Cry "Ho! for the Yo-Semite!"

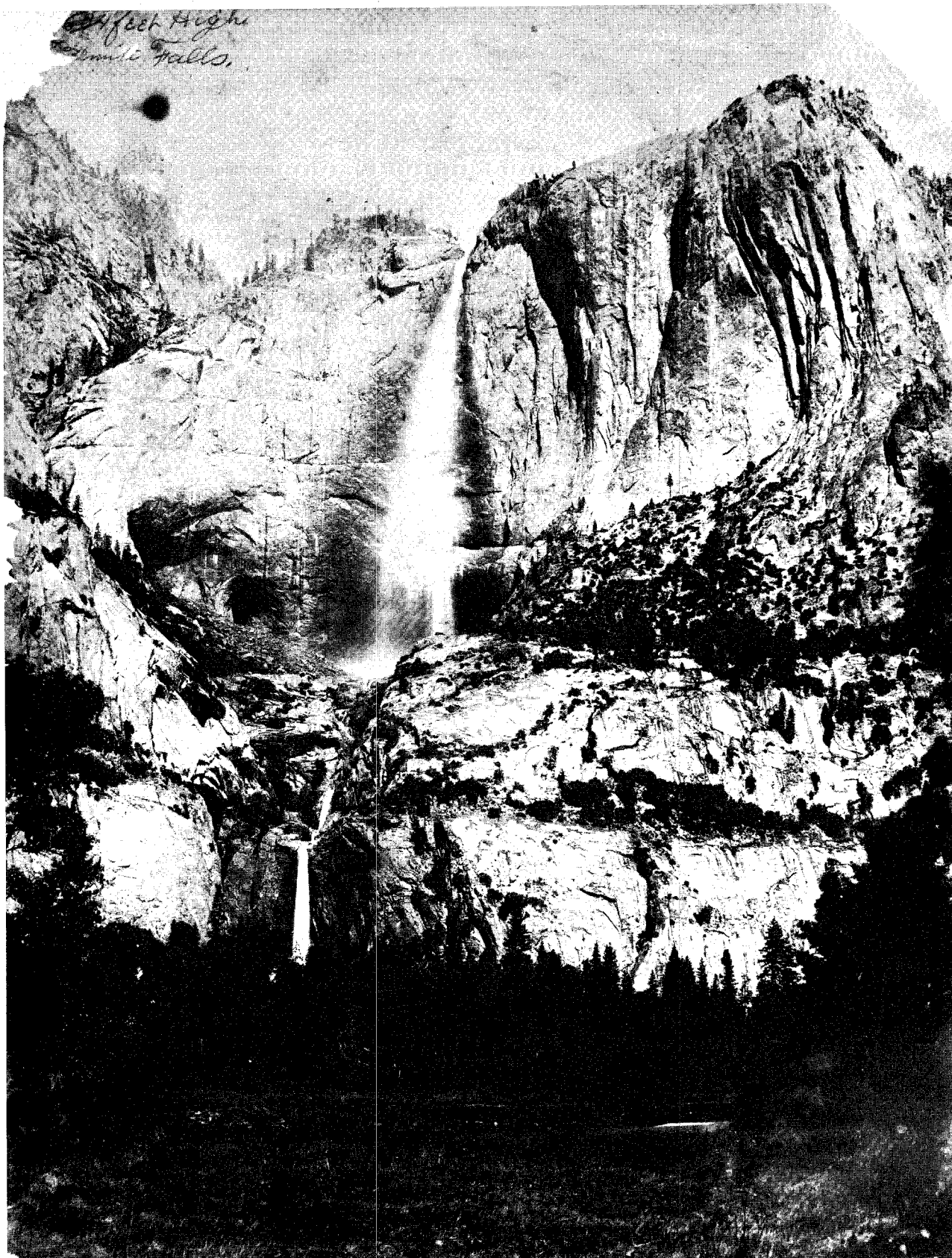
THE early California resident will remember that during the spring and summer of 1850, much dissatisfaction existed among the white settlers and miners on the Merced, San Joaquin, Chowchilla, and Fresno rivers and their tributaries, on account of the frequent robberies committed upon them by the Chook-



THE YO-SEM-ITE FALL. TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED FEET IN HEIGHT.
[From a Photograph by C. L. Weed.]

"Photographs by Weed for R. H. Vance."²⁵ Because these views were linked in this way to Vance, their lineage has become confusingly blurred. For example, the Book Club of California's special publication, *A Camera in the Gold Rush* (1946), contained twelve of Weed's remarkable views incorrectly attributed to Vance.²⁶

A perplexing aspect of Weed's early landscape photographs is their undeserved obscurity. If nothing else, it should be acknowledged that his 1859 Yosemite views reproduced in the widely-read *Hutchings' California Magazine* probably influenced Watkins to make his well-known sojourn in Yosemite in 1861. The 1861-63 mammoth-plate views on which Watkins' reputation for landscape photography is largely based are not without precedent. In fact, Weed's explorations in 1859 triggered



Announcing that Weed's Yosemite views were on display at Vance's gallery, this September 15, 1859, notice in the San Francisco Daily Times promised that "duplicates of each can be given at the shortest notice."

HO! FOR THE YO-SEMITE VALLEY

A MAGNIFICENT PHOTOGRAPHIC PANORAMA of the Great Yo Semite Valley, with its immense Waterfalls, Cascades, Cataracts, &c., in all their wild mountain grandeur, with scenes in the Mariposa grove of Mammoth Trees, &c., &c., can now be seen, free of charge, at **VANOE'S PHOTOGRAPHIC GALLERY**, corner of Montgomery and Sacramento streets, San Francisco.

These wonderful views were executed for Mr. V. by C. L. Weed, Esq., whose reputation as one of the best Photographers in the State is a sufficient guarantee that they are excellent specimens of the art. In addition to these, may be seen a large number of finely cut Stereoscopic views of these and other localities, on glass—the first ever executed in this country—and which are not simply pictures, but fac-similies of the spots themselves.

At the same Gallery may also be seen a series of large Photographs of many of the principal mining localities of the State, and numerous Stereoscopic views of San Francisco, Sacramento city and river, &c., &c.

Having the negatives of all the above, duplicates of each can be given at the shortest notice and at the lowest rates. All are invited to call and take a look at them.

au18 1m

an ongoing series of photographic investigations of the Yosemite region: Weed in 1859; Watkins in 1861–63; Weed in 1864; Watkins in 1864, 1865, and 1866; the mysterious W. Harris in 1866; Muybridge in 1867 and 1872; and so on until the present day.

Perhaps the burgeoning popular interest in stereoscopic photography spurred Weed to his next adventure—a visit to the Orient in 1860. Bringing the world into America's parlor, the stereoscopic viewer and its accompanying basket of stereo cards, in fact, became the most significant and influential mode of visual communication during the nineteenth century. Through the magic of these three-dimensional visual images, people could "see for themselves" lifelike images of faraway and exotic scenes and events as never before possible.

The Vance-Weed establishment was determined to

remain at the forefront of innovation in photography. The men's great interest in the stereo process was clearly shown by their gallery's advertisement which reads, "We have on exhibition and for sale at our rooms a collection of over Six Hundred Stereoscopic Views, comprising views of Egypt, the Holy Land, Turkey, France, Switzerland, Italy, England, Scotland, and many portions of the Eastern States."²⁷

Although stereoscopic daguerreotypes had been produced in California as early as 1853—Vance himself was the first to advertise the process—the dual-image in its Mascher case proved unsuccessful because of cost and clumsiness. Not until the development of wet-plate paper prints which could be mounted on cards did stereo photography find popularity. Publishing of paper stereographs was well underway in the major East Coast cities by 1858, and by late 1860 no fewer than 200 United States photographers actively produced stereographs.²⁸

Weed's 1859 stereo views of Yosemite mark the earliest known production of stereographs in California by the wet-plate method. While these views received popular acclaim when exhibited in Vance's San Francisco showrooms, they could not be fully exploited for commercial purposes without mass production and distribution. This need rapidly led to an arrangement between the Vance-Weed gallery and the well-established stereo publishing firm of Edward Anthony & Co. Located in New York, the firm acquired Weed's forty stereographs of Yosemite prior to May, 1860.²⁹ This company, later E. & H. T. Anthony & Co., continued to issue these views for many years without crediting the photographer.

At this time of great achievement, Weed also made his first visit to Hong Kong. No doubt his motives were both economic and artistic, and he probably sought to enter the international photographic market. By the end of the



Weed showed his Yosemite photographs at Vance's Gallery in 1859 and ran the gallery from 1861 to 1863. Vance advertised the "largest [sky] lights in the city."

1850s, intense competition among portrait photographers was beginning to raise havoc in the large galleries saddled with substantial overhead costs, and accordingly, many of the largest New York galleries had begun to move into new service areas as outlets—and sometimes as publishers—for imported stereoscopic views from Europe and elsewhere. Vance and Weed seemed determined to explore such an arrangement in the Orient.

Throughout 1859, Californians had grown increasingly interested in improving regular steamer traffic to China and Japan. Trade with "the millions of people in Japan and China" was urged by papers such as the *Sacramento Union*,³⁰ which claimed that Americans would benefit as well by access to the Orient's goods and labor. "The pear is nearly ripe," rallied the *Union*, "and it should be plucked before it falls into the lap of some other nation."³¹

Perhaps in this spirit, Weed and a man named Howard set out early in 1860 to establish a photographic gallery in Hong Kong. Vance probably participated in this venture through his principal San Francisco-gallery photographer, Milton M. Miller, who accompanied the expedition. On October 3, 1860, the *China Mail* reported, "Photographs and Ambrotypes, Messrs. Weed & Howard, will depart for Shanghai by the 2nd mail steamer of month."³²

Whether or not the men were successful in the enterprise is unknown, and Miller shortly took over from Weed and Howard. By January 1, 1861, according to the *China Directory*, Miller ran a notice informing "residents and visitors of Hong Kong, that he has fitted up the room lately occupied by Mr. Howard, on the Parade Ground, and is now prepared to take photographic pictures of all kinds. Likenesses from miniature to life size, views of



Captioned "The Heads: Entrance to the Bay of San Francisco: Golden Gate in the Distance," this stereograph image was one of seventy-eight California views issued by E. Anthony in its 1860 catalog. Weed's views appear to be the first wet-plate and paper-print stereo images made in the Far West.

Attributed to "Weed & Howard," this 1860 view of Peddlers' Wharf in the Hong Kong harbor offers a rare, early glimpse of the Orient.



houses executed at short notice . . . a collection of views of various places for sale."³³

Weed's China adventure was over. He returned to California to take charge of Vance's gallery while his senior partner traveled to Nevada, most likely in response to the exciting discovery of the Comstock Lode in late 1859. By the spring of 1860, miners were rushing to the Washoe Mines, and Vance hurried to establish photographic studios in Virginia City and Carson City. According to an 1864 account, however, "owing to business outside, and independent of that of the gallery, Mr. Vance could no longer give it his undivided attention; and in 1861, the San Francisco business passed into the hands of Mr. C. L. Weed."³⁴

During the winter of 1861-62, Weed journeyed to Nevada with his large camera. While the circumstances are unknown, a series of landscape views known as the "Gold Canyon Panorama" testifies to the excursion.³⁵ No doubt the scenes were made at Vance's suggestion for hanging in his booming Virginia City establishment. A number of these fine images are reproduced in *A Camera in the Gold Rush* but incorrectly attributed therein to Vance.³⁶

En route to Nevada in late 1861, Weed made at least one large photograph, as well as a series of stereographs of the flood in Sacramento which began in December and continued through January, 1862. Shortly after Weed's visit, the *Sacramento Bee* touted the stereographs under the headline: "Flood! Flood!—Stereoscopic Views of the principal streets of Sacramento. . . . These views are all taken from the most eligible points, and afford very correct ideas of how we looked when the waters were upon us."³⁷

Although the flood stereographs were offered through the Vance galleries in both Sacramento and San Francisco, they were advertised as being available "for a short time only." In part this urgency was probably explained by Weed's need to continue on his photographic excursion to Nevada. There he made many large views,

particularly of major mining sites and boomtowns. For the most part these latter views are undated, although he produced at least one photograph of Virginia City on the Fourth of July, 1862.³⁸

Weed returned from Nevada by the fall of the year to participate in the California State Fair, where he received a prize for his landscape photographs. Although he continued operating the San Francisco gallery, an unknown illness reportedly resulted in the sale of the gallery to the large San Francisco photographic firm of Bradley & Rulofson in 1863.³⁹ One wonders, however, if the gallery might have been sold because of financial and administrative vicissitudes rather than sickness.

Freed from responsibilities for the San Francisco gallery, Weed again disappeared from the public eye. Circumstantial evidence suggests that during 1864 he was engaged by the stereo publishing firm of Lawrence & Houseworth which produced hundreds of stereoscopic views of California, including a large group taken in the Sierra Nevada and Yosemite regions.⁴⁰ While Weed's authorship of these prints cannot be pinpointed, it seems certain that he led or joined the parent photographic excursion.

Presumably, Weed's association with Lawrence & Houseworth began shortly after he sold his gallery and continued into the 1870s. In fact, Weed's stereographs of the Sacramento flood published in 1863 are probably the first images produced by the important San Francisco-based firm. George S. Lawrence, an optician and jeweler who opened his shop in the city in 1851, and Thomas Houseworth, also an optician, officially joined together on May 15, 1855.⁴¹ In the beginning, they merely published stereographs as an adjunct to being opticians and dealers in fine cutlery, but by 1864, the partners plunged into the stereo-publishing market.

Utilizing a special photographic wagon (visible in several stereographic images), Lawrence & Houseworth's photographing expedition traveled for many months in 1864 and covered a large geographic area. One stereo-

graph from this trip, *Photographing in the Sierra Nevada Mountains*, shows a party of four men, perhaps including the photographer and the photographer's portable dark-room tent. Judging from the number of views produced and the size of the party, the expedition probably included more than one photographer. Possibly Weed worked with one or more well-trained assistants.⁴²

The seriousness of the Lawrence & Houseworth stereo-publishing enterprise is hinted at in the preface to the firm's catalog which noted: "Views of every description of Mining, of Cities, Streets, Public Buildings, and most of the points of interest in our California Scenery. . . ." Unhindered by parochial vision, the firm proceeded to assert: "Having a House in New York, under the charge of a partner resident there and in Europe, and our stock being large and well selected, and imported direct from European and Eastern Manufacturers, we know that we can offer special inducements, both as regards quality and price, to the Trade and the General Public."⁴³

Perhaps the best evidence supporting Weed's presence on Lawrence & Houseworth's 1864 excursion is the existence of thirty mammoth-plate views of Yosemite made from 17" x 22" glass-plate negatives produced in the summer of 1864.⁴⁴ In fact, Lawrence & Houseworth stereograph no. 262, *Three Brothers—Yosemite Valley*, clearly shows Weed's mammoth-plate camera. One of Weed's large views was made from this same vantage point, and many other stereographs from the excursion are similar to mammoth plates known to be by Weed.

From the mammoth-plate negative, finished prints were mounted on 22" x 28" mounts and displayed in the windows of the Lawrence & Houseworth store at 317 and 319 Montgomery Street. They were offered for sale to the public at \$3 each, or \$4 each in a "Fine Black

Walnut Frame." Hand-colored stereoscopic views went at \$6 per dozen, uncolored ones at \$4.50 per dozen.⁴⁵ The gallery also sold *carte-de-visite*-sized "Album Views" made by mounting one of the stereograph's two images on a card.

Unlike Watkins, who received immediate praise for his early mammoth-plate views of Yosemite, Weed waited almost three years before his efforts in Yosemite received their deserved acclaim. In 1867, Lawrence & Houseworth sent a sizeable group of photographs to the Paris International Exposition, including "26 large views of Yo-Semite and 'the Big Trees' [by Weed], 341 stereoscopic views, viz: 21 of Yo-Semite, 33 of Mammoth Trees, 40 of San Francisco, 17 of Hydraulic Mining, and 43 of Placer Mining; also, 158 of scenery of various parts of California, and 29 of scenery in Nevada. . . ." According to the San Francisco *Bulletin*, the pictures were "recognized by the bronze medal, the highest award made for photographic views."⁴⁶

Both the foreign and domestic press responded enthusiastically to the exhibit. The *Illustrated London News*, for example, marveled at the rich and unspoiled aspects of the scenes: "In none of these pictures do we see the least signs of man; not a log hut nor an axe-felled tree to indicate his presence; all seems wild, primitive."⁴⁷

Although Weed had produced the mammoth-plate photographs which represented California at the Paris Exhibition, nowhere is he mentioned as the artist. Certainly he was nevertheless pleased with the artistic success of the showing. Echoing a sentiment expressed by every commentator on the photography section at the exhibition, the *San Francisco Alta* observed that the views were works of art "beyond praise."⁴⁸

Equally typical is the *Alta*'s confusion of the authorship of the photographs. Erroneously attributing thirty mammoth-plate scenes of California to Carleton Watkins, the *Alta* corrected itself two days later by noting: "Our report of the proceedings of the Paris Exhibition Committee meeting on Saturday last contained an error,



Weed's darkroom tent stands next to the Lawrence & Houseworth photography wagon in this 1864 scene taken in the Sierra Nevada. Weed made his mammoth-plate views of Yosemite on this trip.



Thirty inches tall, Weed's mammoth-plate camera rests on a beach in Yosemite in 1864.



Weed's 1864 mammoth-plate view of Mirror Lake was among several of his Yosemite images that won medals for landscape photography at the 1867 Paris International Exposition. Publishers Lawrence & Houseworth submitted the views to the show.

Stereograph publisher Houseworth stands at the right in the doorway of his shop at 317-319 Montgomery Street in 1864. Many of Weed's mammoth plates of Yosemite are displayed in the windows. Houseworth, who became sole owner in 1867, published and managed Weed's work when the photographer was in Hawaii and China. Next door is the studio of another pioneer photographer, Jacob Shew.



arising from a misunderstanding in regard to views of California scenery to be sent to Paris by Lawrence & Houseworth. The large views are not by Watkins as stated, but by C. L. Weed."⁴⁹

No doubt Lawrence and Houseworth, like Robert Vance before them, recognized the quality of Weed's photographic views of the California landscape and the diligence of the artist. A photographer's photographer, Weed nevertheless remained an employee or unheralded associate who worked "behind the scenes" rather than in the public eye.⁵⁰ Unfortunately, this self-effacing trait has made it difficult to establish the full extent of Weed's pictorial legacy.

Certainly the enormous success of Lawrence & Houseworth's photographic publishing venture is in part a tribute to Weed himself. For instance, the 1867 Paris exhibition medallion immediately appeared on the verso of the firm's stereographs as a symbol of excellence at the same time the firm doubled and redoubled its efforts in the marketplace. Of course, the success of the stereographs may have been a foregone conclusion if, as Houseworth's catalog claimed, people believed that "a stranger in one evening, with a good stereoscope, can form a better idea of California scenery than they could by a month's travel through the State."⁵¹

Despite Weed's low public profile, his Yosemite views also garnered a fair measure of local comment in San Francisco. As early as October, 1864, the *San Francisco Alta* commented favorably on his landscape efforts under the bold heading, "The Perfection of Photography: We noticed at Lawrence & Houseworth's . . . a mammoth photograph of 'Mirror Lake.' in the great Yosemite Valley, which appears to be about the acme of perfection in that beautiful art. So perfectly are the mountains in the background, and even small shrubs and vines, reflected in the pure waters of the lake, that the picture is almost equally perfect whether one side or the other be placed uppermost."⁵²

Ever restless, however, Weed once again declined to

savor his accomplishments, and by the end of February, 1865, the peripatetic photographer booked passage on the barque *Smyrniote* bound for Hawaii.⁵³ Again, mystery surrounds this sudden move from the security of his association with Lawrence & Houseworth and his venture into yet another alliance.

Perhaps Weed was attracted to Hawaii by his brother who lived in Honolulu, or perhaps he wanted to be the first to photograph the much heralded scenic wonders of the islands. On the mainland, the Civil War had created an increased demand for Hawaiian sugar, and as a result money flowed freely on the island. No doubt Weed hoped to gain the patronage of the owners of the new sugar plantations, as well as the favor of the Hawaiian monarchy.

Fresh from a photographic sojourn into Yosemite Valley, Weed arrived in the Hawaiian Islands in March, 1865, accompanied by his brother James and a sister.⁵⁴ Joining another brother, Fredrick Maltby Weed, who lived in Honolulu, they formed the Weed Brothers' gallery in Honolulu. The roles of James, Fredrick, and Miss Weed are uncertain; surely Charles would have been principally responsible for the work produced by the gallery.

Aside from newspaper accounts, the only record of Weed's work in Hawaii is found in an 1893 exhibit catalog from Honolulu's Bishop Museum.⁵⁵ This catalog credits Weed with five mammoth portraits and one view of Honolulu, photographs which were exhibited in the museum in that year. Housed there today are Weed's only known Hawaiian landscapes and portraits: nineteen mammoth views, eight mammoth portraits, thirteen stereo views, six *carte-de-visite* views, and many *carte-de-visite* portraits. Most have been overlooked because the reticent Weed did not sign or identify his photographs.

Princess Ruth Keelikalanani sat for this Weed Brothers' tintype in 1865. The non-reversing tintype camera shows Weed's standard books-and-tablecloth props at the left.



Weed's Hawaiian career began in April, 1865, when the Weed Brothers opened their photographic gallery on Fort Street, Honolulu's main street. Heralding the opening, the newspaper noted that Weed "put up a building expressly for the purpose. Having brought with him all the fixtures for such an establishment, he is able, in an incredibly short time, to commence work." Continuing, the paper commented that "his large photographic views of Yosemite Valley show what he has done elsewhere, and should he be equally successful in Honolulu and other parts of the islands, his establishment will be liberally patronized by the public." Taking note that Weed's gallery was open for business, the paper reported that Weed was "about to take a large photographic view of Honolulu."⁵⁶

Following Weed's work with great interest, local papers reported in May that "Weed's photographic establishment is turning out some specimens of the very largest sized portraits, almost equal to the copperplate [engraving]. The small-sized are struck-off 'four at a pop.'"⁵⁷ Most distinctive about Weed's studio portraits were their large size (approximately 16" x 20") and their superb printing quality. His poses and studio accouterments seldom varied, and most of his subjects looked straight into the camera. Usually completing the portraits are a small, familiarly draped table with two books stacked at the left, a hanging curtain in the background, and a plaid floor covering.

From the chatter in the Honolulu papers, it seems Weed's mammoth-sized portraits proved a popular

novelty. What the photographer lacked in studio flair was apparently compensated for by the uniqueness and quality of the prints. "The Photographic Art, as now managed by Mr. Weed," observed one reporter, "is certainly producing some surprising results. It is perfectly wonderful to see the perfection and size of some of his portraits. We supposed there must be some limit to the size of views, but at present it does not seem to be attained."⁵⁸

An outdoorsman, Weed also turned his attention to the Hawaiian landscape, and the Bishop Museum's collection of Weed prints includes three mammoth views of Honolulu taken from the city's prison. Placed side by side, these views form a panorama of the city. Complimenting it is another view of the city taken from the rim of Punchbowl Crater and nearly identical stereo and *carte-de-visite* views. Although Hawaiian newspaper accounts and advertisements never mentioned that Weed produced stereo views, this omission may result from unfamiliarity with the day's common photographic terms. If any distinction was made, the phrases "very largest sized portraits" and "large photographic views" described mammoth-sized works and "small-sized" indicated *carte-de-visite* images.⁵⁹

Never a man to stay long in one place, Weed closed the new gallery for the month of July in order to visit the island of Maui where he made his sole effort to photograph "other parts of the islands."⁶⁰ Some months later a Honolulu paper noted: "At the photographic gallery of the Brothers Weed can be seen some fine views of sugar estates and scenery on Maui, including the famous crater of Haleakala, of which they have three views." Continuing, the newspaper expressed regrets that "on account of the difficulty experienced in packing their apparatus about the island, they have concluded not to visit the other islands of the group."⁶¹

Eight of Weed's mammoth views of Maui are held by the Bishop Museum, four of which show Christopher H. Lewers' plantation and residence at Waihee. Doubt-

less, Weed was drawn to this plantation because it was typical of Hawaii's newly developing sugar operations. As glowingly described by a correspondent to a Honolulu paper, the Lewers plantation photographed by Weed was surrounded by emerald green hills which grew "tiresome to the eye [until] the white chimney and long, neat factory-looking building of the Waihee mill break upon the sight. The white abutments which sustain the suspension flume, and the general arrangement of the building, give evidence of no small architectural and engineering skill in their plan and construction."⁶²

Weed's contemporaries who went sightseeing in the Hawaiian Islands frequently commented on the hardships they encountered, especially in trying to view the spectacular Haleakala Crater. Mark Twain, for example, complained in 1866 that "we climbed a thousand feet up the side of this isolated colossus one afternoon; then camped and the next day climbed the remaining nine thousand feet and anchored on the summit, where we built a fire and froze and roasted by turns all night."⁶³ Before Weed succeeded in making a mammoth-plate view of the scenic wonder, no photographer had ventured the strenuous expedition described by Twain. Up the volcanic slope, pack animals had to haul Weed's photographic apparatus, including the mammoth view camera, a *carte-de-visite* camera, possibly a stereo camera, at least three glass plates approximately 17" x 21", glass plates for the other cameras, and a portable darkroom with all the chemicals necessary to coat and process the wet-plate negatives. Because the crater had no water source, animals also had to carry water for the processing of the plates. In addition, the thinness of the atmosphere at 10,000 feet would make it difficult to set up the equipment and prepare the plates. Finally, the party probably had only a limited time to photograph the crater before



the warming day brought in the ever-present obscuring clouds.

Not surprisingly, then, Weed's mammoth views of Haleakala Crater created a noticeable stir in Honolulu. Reported one paper: "Magnifique, excellent, pretty fair! On beholding Weed's large photographic views of scenery on Maui and of Honolulu, we involuntarily exclaimed in the above language of the Frenchman, whose astonishment on a certain occasion well-nigh overcame him. The age of wonders and art has not passed away. Knowing the difficulties attending the ascent of Haleakala, we are more than astonished to learn that he succeeded so well in taking views of the largest crater in the world."⁶⁴

Shortly after Charles' return to Honolulu, the Weeds

suddenly decided to leave for Hong Kong. "During their stay here," observed one newspaper, "they have taken some very choice views of Sandwich Island scenery and sugar mills, as well as views of Honolulu, and houses and streets in the city. We have never before been favored with so skillful scenic artists as these gentlemen, and to our brethren of the press in China, Manila, or wherever else they may go, we commend them, in the words of a practical photographer in San Francisco, as the 'most worthy and skillful artists in the Pacific if not the world.' The collection of views which they will gather in their tour around the world, must be one of the most valuable ever made, and we trust they will receive an ample reward for their labor."⁶⁵

Although Charles Weed remained in the Hawaiian

Weed produced at least three mammoth-plate views of Maui's Haleakala Crater. To make the large-size wet plates, he carried water and sheets of glass up the volcanic crater.

Islands for only nine months, his gallery was reportedly "liberally patronized by the public."⁶⁶ Weed, however, was unsatisfied simply with the financial success of the Honolulu gallery. Newspaper accounts suggest that he planned to photograph the scenic wonders of the islands but was discouraged by the difficulties experienced on Maui. If circumstances had been more favorable, perhaps he would have extended his stay in order to photograph the undocumented landscape around him.

On December 9, 1865, Charles, his brother James, and Miss Weed left Honolulu aboard the *Fairlight* for Hong Kong.⁶⁷ From Hawaii, they headed to an even more exotic site, described in a contemporary account thusly: "[Hong Kong] is built of white granite, laid out in regular streets, which rise in terraces one above the other. . . . The harbor is full of shipping—merchant vessels of all nations . . . French, English, American, and Russian men-of-war. Between these glide all day long, boats of all patterns, junks, and sampans. . . . A pull of five or ten minutes brings the traveller to the stone quay, and as he mounts one of the numerous flagged stairs along its face, he finds himself surrounded by eager coolies or porters, and chair-men."⁶⁸

On January 26, 1866, the *Daily Press* announced the party's safe arrival in Hong Kong, provocatively remarking that "Mr. Weed, to begin work in the colony as a photographer, was here some years ago." By March, the dauntless Weed Brothers had opened a photographic establishment "opposite the *Daily Press* office."⁶⁹

Unfortunately, the precise nature of the Weeds' business activities, the length of their stay, and the ultimate success of their venture is obscure at best. Nor is there any indication which proves or disproves that they had continued on their "tour around the world." *The Chronicle and Directory for China* . . . reported their pres-

ence in Hong Kong from 1866 to 1867. However, no further mention appears until 1872, when the *China Directory* listed merely: "Fisler, L.F., Successor to C.L. Weed photographic artist, Canton Road."⁷⁰

What transpired in the intervening years is only conjecture. The 1869 catalog of the San Francisco-based Thomas Houseworth & Co., for instance, advertised "large" and "mammoth-plate" views of China and Japan, including "the most noted Buildings, Temples, Bronze Images, Harbor and River views, Burying Grounds, and Panoramic views of the principal Cities, Pagodas, etc."⁷¹ Also included in the listing were 153 stereographs of similar subjects. Weed may have been responsible for these images.

Another speculation is that Weed may have traveled to the Paris Exposition in 1867 and worked in Europe. This idea has some support in a news article in the *Red Bluff Sentinel* of November 5, 1870, perhaps the first public mention of his return to California, which reads: "Mr. C. L. Weed, is now engaged fitting up rooms in the Old Luna House. . . . Mr. Weed is a No. 1 artist, has been engaged in the Photographic business for the last twenty years, is said to be one of the finest artists on the Pacific Coast. He has practiced his profession in many of the principal cities of Europe for the last ten years with good success."⁷²

By March, 1871, Weed had moved from the Luna House location to "new quarters in the rear of Chase and Brothers Paint Shop, near Crandall's Harness Establishment."⁷³ A little over a month later—in a business turnover rapid even for the times—the firm had passed into the hands of photographer Fred Taylor, and Weed returned to his old haunts in San Francisco.⁷⁴

Nearing fifty years of age and perhaps tiring of setting up his own studio once again, Weed now allied himself with a succession of photographic publishers: Thomas Houseworth & Co. in 1871–72; Bradley & Rulofson in 1872–74; Silas Selleck in 1875; and Charles Lake Cramer in 1875–78.⁷⁵ In each instance, little evidence exists to

PHOTOGRAPHY.



C. L. WEED,

Would announce to the citizens of Red Bluff and vicinity that he has fitted up rooms in the Old Luna House, where he is prepared to supply those wishing them, with all the latest styles of Photographs.

Late improvements enable him to operate without regard to the weather.

Red Bluff, November 12, 1870.

explain his precise link with these establishments. Exactly concurrent with Weed's involvement with both Houseworth and Bradley & Rulofson, however, the firms produced particularly large numbers of landscape photographs.

Muybridge scholar Robert Haas tells us that Muybridge was affiliated with Thomas Houseworth from 1871 to 1872, the years of Weed's association with the same firm. Moreover, Haas reports that by May, 1872, Muybridge (in connection with Houseworth) issued a prospectus announcing plans for a mammoth-plate series on Yosemite "with an aim at the highest artistic treatment the subject affords." When Muybridge returned from his expedition to Yosemite, however, he immediately repudiated his prior arrangements with Houseworth and joined Bradley & Rulofson. This happened at exactly the same time Charles Weed moved to Bradley & Rulofson.⁷⁶

Weed's mammoth plate of a sugar plantation and processing plant at "Wailuku Valley" was cropped and fastened on a mount. These views provided much-needed income to the landscape photographer.

Studio portraits brought Weed income after he returned to California in 1870. The Red Bluff Sentinel carried this business announcement for Weed.

The resulting implication that Weed accompanied Muybridge to Yosemite in 1872 is very strong. It would, of course, have been an ideal arrangement, since Weed had experience producing large plates in Yosemite. Even more important for a possible Weed-Muybridge association is Weed's long record of working as a team member and of eschewing personal glorification. For Muybridge's large ego, this willingness to defer credit would have been very important.

Further evidence of the presumed association of Weed and Muybridge appears in an album published by Coyne & Relyea in 1874. Entitled *Sun Pictures of the Yo-Semite Valley, Cal.*, the work is composed of forty-four views of Yosemite and the Big Trees Grove signed by Thomas Houseworth & Co. It is certain that these mounted photographs were printed from negatives copied from Weed's 1864 mammoth-plate views and from others which have all the earmarks of Muybridge's work.⁷⁷ The latter negatives may have been obtained from Muybridge's 1872 excursion as partial payment for Houseworth's initial financial support of the project.

The *Sun Pictures* album appears to be the final exposure given Weed's Yosemite views. Many of his stereographs of California scenery, however, were published in years to come. As for Weed himself, by 1880 he had become a photoengraver, an occupation which he followed well into the 1890s.⁷⁸ During this period he lived quietly with his wife, Sarah P. Weed, whom he had married in the mid-1870s.⁷⁹ He died without fanfare on August 31, 1903, in Oakland, at age seventy-nine.⁸⁰

Charles Leander Weed's last years were unusually quiet for a man whose life had been so full of adventure and whose works had helped established landscape photography in California. Weed's pictorial efforts set precedents of very high tradition, yet those who owed him the greatest debt praised him the least. Even more disconcerting are recent observers who, failing to understand his influence, describe his landscape efforts as provincial and visually naive. Additional study, however, will show



SUGAR PLANTATION & WORKS.
(Maunaloa Valley H.I.)

that Weed deserves a place in the first rank of nineteenth-century western photographers. Perhaps the finest eulogy to Weed's accomplishments in landscape photography is found in the following words of Ansel Adams, dean of Yosemite's twentieth-century photographers: "The orientation of his pictures indicates careful thought and selection of view-point; there is nothing casual or haphazard in his compositions. His selection of field and spacing of forms and areas are efficient and powerful. . . . Photographers of today will surely benefit by study and critical evaluation of these excellent images. They will observe the clarity of line and edge, the simple arrangement of mass, the beauty and richness of tonal values. Above all, they will respond to the integrity and forthright simplicity of [Weed's] photography and to his devotion to the enduring qualities of the world around him."⁸¹

The illustrations on pages 197, 198, 201, 202 and 203 are courtesy the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; on pages

194-5, courtesy Nevada Historical Society, Reno; on page 205, courtesy Robert A. Weinstein; on page 206 (top), courtesy Lou Smaus; on page 210 (top), courtesy New York Public Library; on page 209 (bottom), courtesy California State Library; on page 209 (top), Society of California Pioneers; on page 210 (bottom), Paul T. Shafer; on pages 212, 214, and 217, courtesy The Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii. The photograph on page 206 (bottom) is reproduced from Clark Worswick, *Imperial China* (New York, 1978).

Notes

1. Peter T. Conmy, City Historian, City of Oakland, to author, April 16, 1979.
2. *Sacramento Union*, December 25, 1854.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., February 25, 1858. For a study of the career of William Shew, see Wendy Cunkle Calmenson, "William Shew, Pioneer Daguerreotypist," *California Historical Quarterly*, 56:2-19. For references to Vance, see the special Fall, 1978, issue of *California History* focusing on Carleton Watkins, especially the

- articles by Pauline Grenbeaux on Watkins' early career and by Nanette Sexton on Watkins' early style and technique.
5. *Sacramento City Directory*, 1859.
 6. *Sacramento Union*, December 25, 1854.
 7. During 1858, Vance used the collodion wet-plate procedure to make copies of forged documents in the Limantour land fraud case. In the process, a glass negative was contact-printed by sunlight on paper that had been "salted" in a solution of sodium chloride, sensitized in a bath of silver nitrate, and dried. Salt prints lack the surface luster of albumen printing papers.
 8. *San Francisco Alta California*, October 1, 1855.
 9. G. R. Fardon, *San Francisco Album: Photographs of the Most Beautiful Views and Public Buildings of San Francisco* (San Francisco: Herre & Bauer, 1856).
 10. Mary V. and A. W. Hood, *The Middle Fork of the American River, Then and Now, 1858-1958* (unpublished manuscript held by the Yosemite National Park Museum, n.d.). This document contains an important and sensitive assessment of the origin and circumstances surrounding the production of Weed's American River Panorama in 1858.
 11. Hutchings, of course, knew the value of photographs as sources for illustrations. His *Miner's Own Book* contains an engraving based on an "ambrotype by Woods & Michaels." He also utilized a daguerreotype by W. Salmon and an ambrotype by McKown & Bishop in early issues of *Hutchings' California Magazine*.
 12. *San Francisco Times*, *San Francisco Alta*, and *Sacramento Bee*, November 2, 1858.
 13. Edward Vischer, "A Trip to the Mining Regions in the Spring of 1859," *California Historical Quarterly*, 11 (September, 1932): p. 229.
 14. Mary V. Hood, "Charles L. Weed, Yosemite's First Photographer," *Yosemite Nature Notes*, 38 (June, 1959): p. 86.
 15. Bill and Mary Hood, "Yosemite's First Photographers," *Yosemite: Saga of a Century, 1864-1964* (Oakhurst, Ca.: Sierra Star Press, 1964), p. 49.
 16. Carl Parcher Russell, *One Hundred Years in Yosemite: The Story of a Great Park and Its Friends* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 56.
 17. Hood, "Weed," p. 83. It is uncertain whether this image is taken from a large negative or a stereograph, however. The latter seems more likely, according to Eldon Gruppe.
 18. Emil Ernst, "Yosemite's First Tourists," *Yosemite Nature Notes*, 34 (June, 1955): p. 77.
 19. Hood, "Weed," p. 82.
 20. *San Francisco Times*, August 19, 1859.
 21. *Ibid.*, September 15, 1859.
 22. *Hutchings' California Magazine*, October, November, December, 1859 and March, 1860.
 23. Hood, "Weed," p. 80.
 24. Hutchings continued to use many of these illustrations in his *Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity in California* (1861, 1862, 1870, and 1876). They also appear in *In the Heart of the Sierras* (1886).
 25. *Hutchings' California Magazine*, March, 1860.
 26. Edith M. Coulter and Jeanne Van Nostrand, editors, *A Camera in the Gold Rush* (San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1946). "A series of Photographs of Pacific Coast Towns, Camps, and Mining Operations of Pioneer Days."
 27. From an advertising broadside c.1859 for "Vance's First Premium Gallery" held by the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
 28. William C. Darrah, *The World of Stereographs* (Gettysburg: Published by the author, 1977), pp. 21-24.
 29. The Edward Anthony catalogue of May, 1860, per information provided by A. Verner Conover, lists a total of seventy-eight titles of California stereographs. Numbers one through forty-one are from Yosemite and environs.
 30. *Sacramento Union*, December 22, 1858.
 31. *Ibid.*
 32. *China Mail*, October 3, 1860.
 33. *China Directory*, 1862.
 34. *San Francisco Business Directory and Mercantile Guide for 1864-65*, p. 267.
 35. In a letter to Beaumont Newhall (dated May 3, 1957, and held by the International Museum of Photography, Rochester, New York), Mary Hood assesses the early Vance-Weed images: "I believe (that we have reconstructed) three of the famous Vance Panoramas. . . . A. The American River Panorama taken in the fall (probably October, 1858). B. The Yosemite Panorama which we know was taken between June 18 and July 2, 1859. C. The Gold Canyon Panorama (Nevada) taken in early summer about 1862 or thereabouts."
 36. Coulter and Van Nostrand, *A Camera in the Gold Rush*. All of the original Weed prints held by Stanford University are currently missing.
 37. *Sacramento Bee*, January 30, 1862.
 38. Coulter and Van Nostrand, *A Camera in the Gold Rush*, "Virginia City Volunteer Firemen on C Street."
 39. *San Francisco Business Directory and Mercantile Guide for 1864-65*, p. 276.
 40. The exact number of stereographs produced by Lawrence & Houseworth in 1864 is unknown. By 1866, their catalog lists more than 1000 views many of which are known to have been made in 1864. In October, 1864, Lawrence & Houseworth advertised a stereoscopic view inventory of 1025-dozen items. By April of the following year, their holdings had increased to 2500-dozen stereoscopic views.
 41. *San Francisco City Directory*, 1856.
 42. It is possible that the Sacramento-based stereophotographer A. A. Hart joined the party, or that the enigmatic W. Harris may

- have gained some of his experience on this trip. Many other possibilities also exist.
43. *Catalogue of Lawrence & Houseworth Opticians* . . . (3rd edition held by the Library of Congress, c.1866), p. 3, 4.
 44. *Ibid.* p. 45. A set of thirty mammoth-plate views of Yosemite are held by the New York Public Library. Another complete set, formerly owned by the Mercantile Library, is now privately held. Further mention is made in the *Catalogue of Photographic Views* (Thomas Houseworth & Co., 5th edition, c.1869), pp. 68–70.
 45. *Catalogue of Lawrence & Houseworth Opticians* . . . (3rd edition held by the Library of Congress, c.1866), pp. 44–45.
 46. *San Francisco Bulletin*, June 10, 1868.
 47. *Illustrated London News*, September 14, 1867.
 48. *San Francisco Alta*, January 13, 1867.
 49. *Ibid.*, January 15, 1867.
 50. This may not have been entirely altruistic since such agreements concerning ownership and credit were often made as part of the employer–employee relationship. The precedent was set by Mathew Brady, for example, who received credit for all of the Civil War photographs taken by his employees.
 51. *Catalogue of Photographic Views* (Thomas Houseworth & Co., 5th edition, c.1869), quoted on p. 6.
 52. *San Francisco Alta*, October 14, 1864.
 53. Hawaii State Archives Passenger Manifest Index. The *Smyrniote* arrived in Honolulu on March 4, 1865.
 54. Miss T. Weed arrived in Honolulu from San Francisco with J. A. and C. L. Weed on March 4, 1865. Miss M. Weed departed for Hong Kong with James and C. L. Weed on December 9, 1865. All the information on Weed's visit in Hawaii has been compiled by Lynn Davis and Susan Shaner.
 55. William T. Brigham, *A Preliminary Catalogue of Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum of Polynesian Ethnology and Natural History, Part V* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum, 1893).
 56. *The Friend*, April, 1865.
 57. *Ibid.*, May, 1865.
 58. *Ibid.*, June, 1865.
 59. *Ibid.*, May, September, 1865.
 60. *Ibid.*, April, 1865.
 61. *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, September 2, 1865.
 62. *Ibid.*, June 24, 1865.
 63. Samuel Clemens, *Roughing It* (Hartford, Conn.: American Publishing Co., 1872).
 64. *The Friend*, September, 1865.
 65. *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, November 18, 1865.
 66. *The Friend*, April, 1865.
 67. Hawaii State Archives Passenger Manifest Index. The *Fairlight* departed for Hong Kong on December 9, 1865.
 68. *The Californian*, September 1, 1865.
 69. *The Daily Press* (Hong Kong), January 26, March 3, 1866.
 70. *The China Directory*, 1872. This succession probably took place as early as 1870.
 71. *Catalogue of Photographic Views* (Thomas Houseworth & Co., 5th edition, c.1869), p. 71–77. Even if Weed did not actually make these images, he may have been instrumental in arranging for their acquisition by Houseworth.
 72. *Red Bluff Sentinel*, November 5, 1870.
 73. *Ibid.*, March 11, 1871.
 74. *Ibid.*, April 22, 1871.
 75. *San Francisco City Directory*, 1871–1878.
 76. Mary V. Jessup Hood and Robert Bartlett Haas, "Eadweard Muybridge's Yosemite Valley Photographs, 1867–1872," *California Historical Quarterly* 52 (March, 1963): 14–21.
 77. Eldon Gruppe suggests that the images in the *Sun* album which exhibit a significant treatment of the sky area (including cloud effects) may be attributed to Muybridge. Also included in this album is an image of Muybridge seated on a Thomas Houseworth & Co. box. Perhaps it was taken by Weed. Weed is also mentioned as an important member of the Bradley and Rulofson operation in an advertisement appearing in *Sacramento City Directory*, 1874, p. 64.
 78. *Oakland City Directory*, 1880–1893. Paul T. Shafer, however, reports that a C. L. Weed was active at 120 Michigan Avenue in Detroit, Michigan, in the early 1880s. Shafer also observes that "the 'Weed' of Mayo & Weed in Chicago (c.1890–1898) may be Charles Leander Weed." The former seems possible, but the Mayo & Weed association unlikely.
 79. According to her death certificate (Alameda Co. 16-033924), Sarah was born March 30, 1833, in New York and died November 19, 1916.
 80. *The Oakland Tribune*, September 2, 1903.
 81. Beaumont Newhall, "Gold Rush Photographer," *Image*, 1 (December, 1952): 3.

Bible Communism and the Origins of Orange County



*In the early 1880s, Santa Ana's Main Street must have seemed like the frontier
to the Townerite emigrants from New York State.*

Founded in central New York in 1848 by John Humphrey Noyes and a small band of Christian Perfectionists, the Oneida Community was the most radical social experiment in American history. For more than thirty harmonious and increasingly prosperous years, men, women and children growing to some 300 in numbers joined together in this communitarian venture. Then, in 1881, after several years of factionalism, the group disbanded. Although legally transformed in that year into a capitalist enterprise which became (and remains) a leading manufacturer of silverware, the Utopian Socialist community nevertheless lived on in more than its name alone. Notably, one dissident group of Oneida "Bible Communists" migrated to Southern California in the early 1880s, where they settled in what has become Orange County. Although deeply regretting the dissolution of their treasured Oneida Community, this faction of former communards resourcefully created a new life in California, prospering while remaining loyal to their radical communitarian heritage. Some became intellectual leaders, merchants, farmers, and ranchers, and many actively participated in civic affairs and in Democrat, Populist, and Socialist party politics. James W. Towner, leader of this dissident group of Oneidans called "Townerites," was appointed by the governor of California to serve as chairman of the committee that organized Orange County. He later became the county's first superior court judge.

The experiences of these Townerites on the western frontier provide a missing concluding chapter in the national legacy of nineteenth-century Utopian Socialism. As well, the community's explorations of social questions such as human sexuality, women's liberation, birth control, eugenics, childraising and child care, group therapy, nutrition, and ecology anticipate and mirror the concerns of Californians a century later.¹

A look at the beliefs and practices of John Humphrey Noyes and his Oneida associates helps explain the community's impressive durability, as well as the values and

attitudes of the early immigrants to Orange County from Oneida. By the 1870s, the Oneida communards' highly unconventional approaches to social and sexual matters had attracted both admiration and intense vilification. Yet all their important practices, including Mutual Criticism, Complex Marriage, and Male Continence, were carefully rooted in Perfectionist theological doctrine as formulated by Noyes and his fellow Oneidans. The basic principles of life at the Oneida Community, in other words, had a religious base.²

Mutual Criticism, for example, was the central form of governance at Oneida. Derived from an early European procedure known as the Chapter of Faults, it had been routinely followed in Benedictine monasteries and convents, where priests and nuns adhered to St. Paul's epistles that members "admonish," "rebuke," and "reprove" one another. During Noyes' years at a seminary in Andover, Massachusetts, he had allied with a small renegade band that frankly and openly confessed to each other personal problems and inadequacies. Subsequently, Oneidans adopted "inter-personal feedback" techniques to help members attain personal growth. Psychologists Murray Levine and Barbara Benedict Bunker, who have compared this Mutual Criticism approach with modern forms of group therapy and encounter sessions, have found it to be "striking for its psychological insights and startling to those who believe that sensitivity training and group encounter are major social inventions of our own time."³

The doctrine of Complex Marriage, or pantagamy, on the other hand, was Noyes' ingenious solution to the perplexing theological problem of how to reconcile earthly

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[Oneidans] dealt forthrightly and creatively with eugenics, child care, sex education, nutrition, and ecology.

marriage with the need to be both sinless and spiritually committed to God. Initially attracted by the idea of "spiritual affinities" rather than "carnal union" between men and women, Noyes eventually concluded that such platonic relationships were unsatisfactory. Finally in September, 1837, Noyes disclosed in a private letter to a close friend his highly original solution: "When the will of God is done on earth, as it is in heaven *there will be no marriage*. The marriage supper of the Lamb is a feast at which *every dish is free to every guest*. Exclusiveness, jealousy, quarreling have no place there. . . . In a holy community, there is no more reason why sexual intercourse should be restrained by law, than why eating and drinking should be and there is as little occasion for shame in the one case as in the other. . . ." ⁴

Noyes' radical proposal was neither an invitation to Mormon polygamy (which Oneidans firmly rejected as oppression of women) nor a plea for either sexual anarchy as practiced by Josiah Warren's Modern Times community or free love as pursued by the communarians of Berlin Heights, Ohio. ⁵ Instead, Noyes assumed that all "saints" were equally dedicated to the Christian faith, so that communism in sexual relations was just as logical and important as communism in economic arrangements. Furthermore, Noyes and the Oneida Community believed that selfishness, the outside world's major sin, was inherent in two basic institutions: exclusive marriage, which made women slaves, and private ownership of wealth, which rewarded greed and acquisitiveness. Both, they believed, must be abolished in order that men and women might again enjoy full communion with God and social justice and harmony. Abhorring "romantic

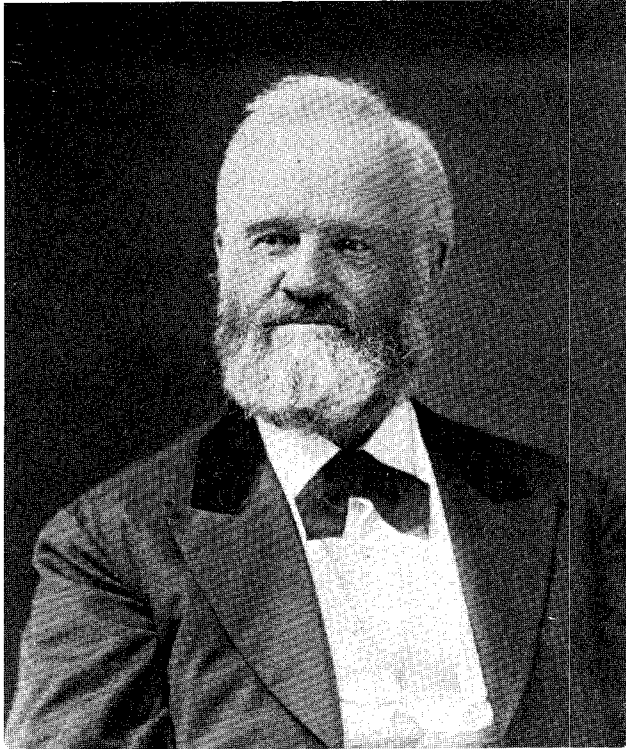
love" as the basis for selecting a mate, Noyes once remarked, "Falling in love is a kind of fatality." ⁶

In order to reconcile earthly marriage with spiritual devotion to God and with liberation of women from marital bondage—as well as to overcome what Noyes viewed as the emotional isolation and social atomization of the nuclear family—Noyes joined with other like-minded persons in the 1840s to build an ideal community of Bible Communists. To implement their beliefs, they made sexual communism, called Complex Marriage (or the marriage of every man to every woman and vice versa) the foundation of their social system. In this way, the Oneida Community became perhaps the only nineteenth-century utopian colony to combine communism in economics with communism in sex.

Because Oneidans wished to free women from unwanted children and regulate the size of their community, they sought to practice some form of birth control. In the absence of effective contraceptives, Noyes invented the method of Male Continence, or "coitus reservatus," whereby the men assumed responsibility for withholding ejaculation. By this means, Oneidans distinguished "amative" and "procreative" intercourse. This moved physical love into the life of the spirit and freed women from onerous duties to their husbands, thereby enabling both parties to enjoy rather than fear sexual relations. The effectiveness of the Oneidans' practice of Male Continence is evidenced by the birth of only two children per year to some forty couples of reproductive age. ⁷

Few areas of social concern escaped the attention of the Oneida Community. Its members dealt equally forthrightly and creatively with eugenics (or "stirpiculture," as they called it), child-care, parent-child relations, sex education, nutrition and dietetic problems, the relationship between mind and body, and ecology. ⁸

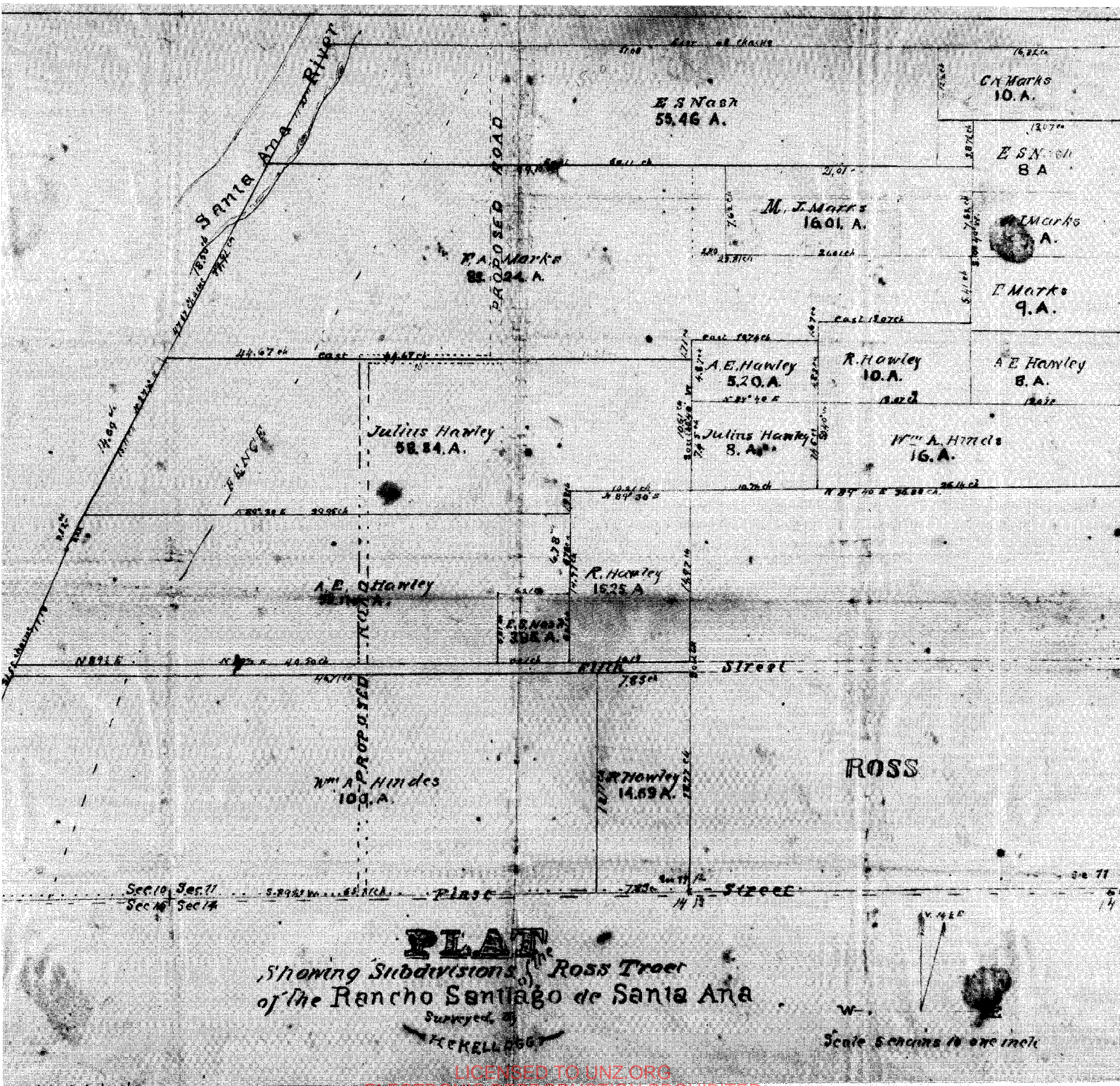
Guided by these principles for more than three decades, the Oneida Community grew to approximately 300 men, women, and children. Despite public criticism for



Founder of the Oneida Community in 1848, John Humphrey Noyes was its principal leader until his self-imposed exile to Canada in 1879. Descendants of the original Bible Communists and current employees of Oneida Silversmiths live in the New York Mansion House which was constructed in the 1860s and enlarged in subsequent years.



This Santa Ana plat map demonstrates the contiguous landholdings of the former Oneida Communalists.



its radical practices, the community prospered financially from commercial forays into trap-making, silk-producing, canning, and in its later years, silver-manufacturing. By the 1870s, however, factionalism and open strife began plaguing the community's seeming unshakable social harmony. What went awry?

Many observers have found the reasons for the Oneida Community's demise in external causes—"public pressure"⁹ or "external opposition."¹⁰ The author of one of the most detailed studies of the Oneida Community, Robert Allerton Parker, however, flatly contradicts these analyses with the assertion that "the real defeat came not from outside opposition, but through dissension among Noyes' followers."¹¹ Two other leading accounts—one by Constance Noyes Robertson (Noyes' granddaughter), and the other by Maren Lockwood Carden—also stress internal factors, including the steady deterioration of Noyes' physical condition; the inability of Noyes' son to serve as an effective leader; disagreements regarding the community's controversial practices of Mutual Criticism, Complex Marriage, and Male Continence; and the rancorous division between supporters of Noyes (the "Noyesites") and those who in the late-1870s increasingly protested his authority (the "Townerites" who eventually migrated to Orange County).¹²

Internal factors clearly held greater significance, although the threat of external reprisals became crucial when Noyes was driven into Canadian exile in June, 1879, to escape charges of statutory rape and adultery. Most relevant here is the internal challenge to Noyes' authority posed by the group that came to be called "Townerites." This dissident faction gathered around two men in particular: William A. Hinds, who had been a community founder and who became president of Oneida Community, Ltd., in 1904, and James W. Towner, the minister, abolitionist, lawyer, judge, Civil War captain, and decorated hero who with a small group joined Oneida as former members of the Berlin Heights Free Love Community. Although the earnest and per-

sistent Towner clan had been denied admission to the Oneida Community for eight years on the grounds of alleged incompatibility between the sexual anarchists of the Berlin Heights variety and the Bible Communists,¹⁴ in 1874 they convinced Noyes and his associates of their commitment to the principles of Bible Communism and were granted membership in the Oneida Community.¹⁵

Suffice it to say that a dispute eventually developed between the Noyesites and the Townerites and that two additional factors help explain the ultimate dissolution of the community. First of all, the Townerites' sexually libertarian and politically democratic proclivities, an indelible legacy of the earlier free love experiences in Berlin Heights in the 1860s, came into conflict with the spiritually hierarchical principles of Oneida. Secondly, Noyes' persistent reliance on the "rule of grace" and his stern rejection of the "rule of law" alienated the more legally-minded Towner group from the rest of the Oneida communards.¹⁶

The deliberate and painful decisions to terminate the Oneida Community and form a joint-stock capitalist corporation were reached in 1879 and 1880. Following a bitter transition period from communal to capitalist organization and, at least in terms of public pronouncement, from pantagamy or Complex Marriage to monogamy, several contingents of Townerites departed Oneida for Southern California in 1881 and 1882. They settled in the small frontier town of Santa Ana which had a population of approximately 1,200 people, and in subsequent years they were augmented by other Oneidans and by the birth of several children. By 1890, nearly 40 former Oneida Bible Communists and their children (or nearly fifteen percent of the community at the time of its dissolution) lived in what had become a rapidly growing agricultural and commercial center.¹⁷

Prior to their departure from New York, the Townerites had carefully formulated a plan for acquiring land in California.

The role played by these Townerites in the settlement and development of Orange County is obscured by the lack of written remnants and by the reticence of most descendants to discuss family matters. We do not know, for example, the extent to which the social and sexual practices of the Oneida Community were continued by the Townerites in Santa Ana. Nor do we know the extent to which the principles of Bible Communism guided their activities or helped maintain a community life in the West. It seems unlikely that the Townerites would have completely abandoned the social and sexual behavior they practiced so long at Berlin Heights and at Oneida. Highly principled, not frivolous, people, they were well accustomed to criticism from “conventional” society. Towner, in particular, had adamantly argued during the final months of the Oneida Community that Complex Marriage should be continued even in the face of virulent public attacks.¹⁸

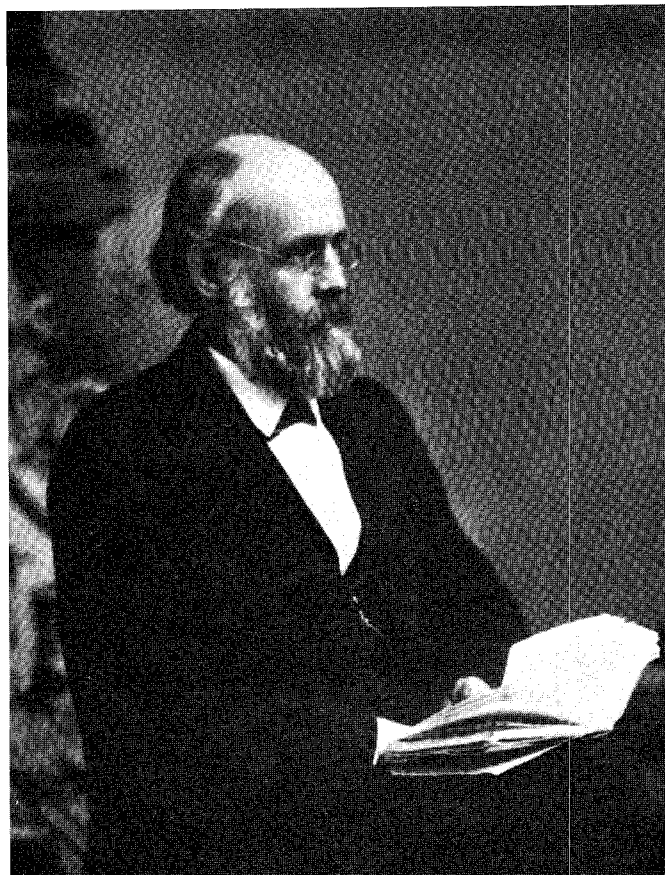
Nevertheless, these practices, even if continued in Santa Ana, were never publically espoused. By this time, the national “purity crusade” against the polygamy of Mormonism and the sexual associationism of the Oneida Community had gained full momentum. As social historian David Pivar has noted, in the 1870s and 1880s “a tumultuous debate [raged] about sex, marriage, morals, and divorce in America. Oneida had become a symbol of free love and, hence, a threat to social organization. . . .”¹⁹ Under such circumstances, the Townerites would have been foolish to flaunt their deviant ways at the same time that they were trying to integrate themselves in a new environment. On June 9, 1882, an editorial in the Santa

Ana *Weekly Standard* suggests that their caution was appropriate. Referring to certain new “anti-religious” elements in the community, an editorial writer commented: “It is difficult to figure this thing out—whether it is another ‘Oneida Community’ business or a ‘Mormon outfit.’ At any rate it will be a good idea for parents to keep their eyes on their daughters and husbands on their weak wives. . . .”²⁰

Whatever their sexual practices in Orange County, evidence suggests the Oneida dissidents persisted in functioning as a group in Santa Ana. Particularly important factors were their extensive intermarriage among Townerites, the continuing social and commercial interaction, the correspondence and visits with people who remained at Oneida, and, significantly, the practice of contiguous landholding in Santa Ana.

Prior to their departure from New York, the Townerites had carefully formulated a plan for acquiring land in California. Towner probably drafted the article of agreement dated September, 1881, which made Julius Hawley, Roswell B. Hawley, Alfred E. Hawley, Frederick A. Marks, Martha J. Marks, Edwin S. Nash, Charlotte S. Reid, and William A. Hinds copartners for the purpose of purchasing land. According to the plan, each copartner contributed between \$2,000 and \$2,500 for a period of three years, in order to cultivate and improve the land and to can fruits and vegetables for business and trade. Ultimately the land was to be apportioned according to the plan adopted by the Anaheim Colony, as set forth in Charles Nordhoff’s *The Communitistic Societies of the United States* (1875).²¹ No party to the agreement could sell or dispose of his land without giving the privilege of first purchase to the other parties.²²

By combining their limited financial resources, as they had done for so many years, the former Oneidans were able to raise \$26,200 for purchasing a substantial block of land soon after their arrival in Santa Ana. The 458-acre Ross tract near the western boundary of the city was



Minister, abolitionist, free-love advocate, lawyer, municipal judge, Civil War captain and hero, communalist, and superior court judge, James W. Towner (1823-1911, above, left), led the anti-Noyes faction at Oneida and moved to Santa Ana with more than thirty former communards.



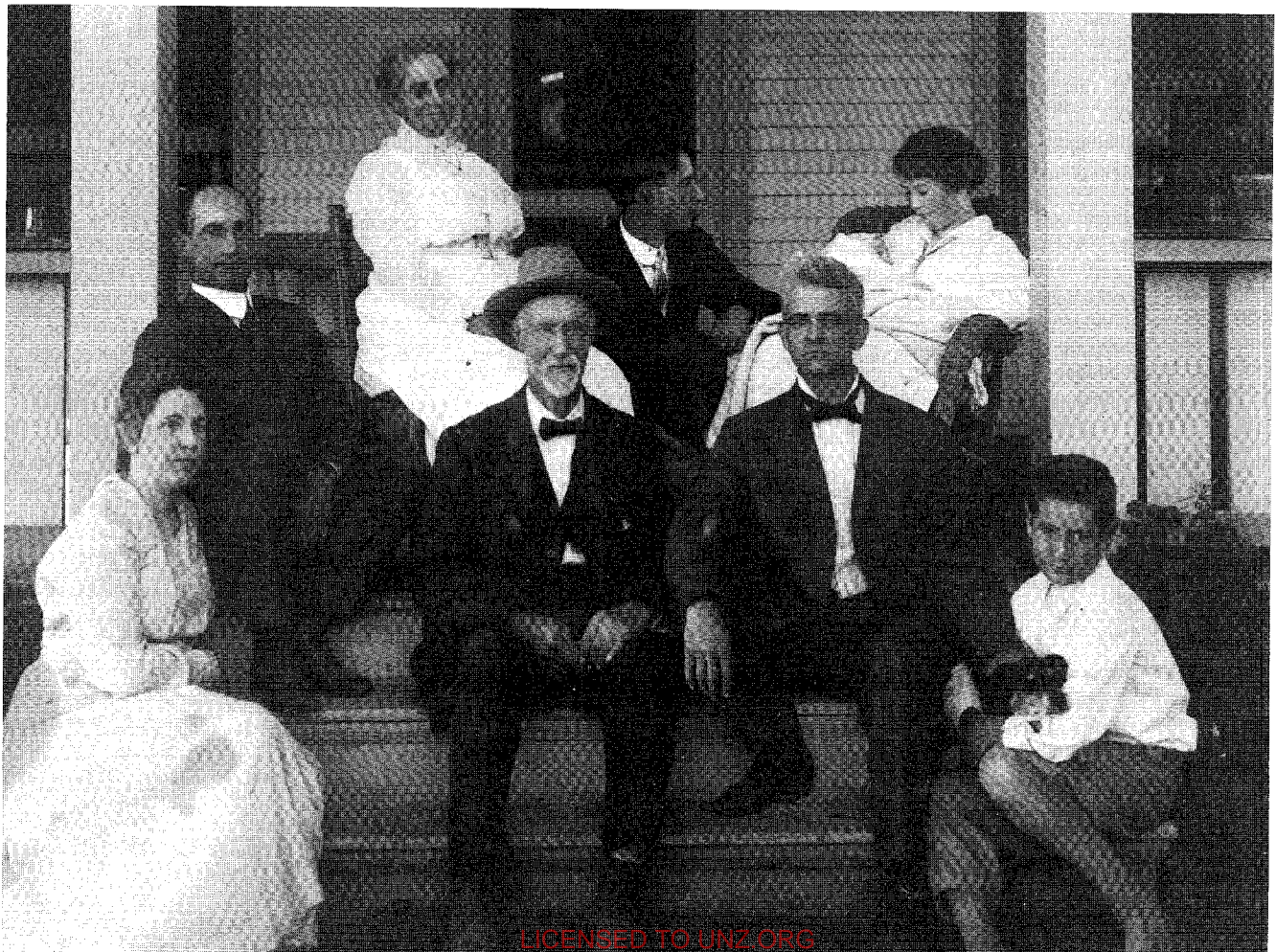
Cinderella Sweet Towner (1829-1894, above) was the wife of James W. Towner during the "free love" years in Berlin Heights, Ohio, the "Bible Communist" years in the Oneida Community in New York, and the "respectable" years in Santa Ana.

D. Edson Smith (1839-1928) joined the Oneida Community in 1867. A leading horticulturist and intellectual, he moved to Santa Ana in 1881, where he became a prominent citrus farmer and civic activist. Ellen Frances Hutchins (Reid) Smith (1838-1922) held several positions at Oneida including superintendent of the Silk Department. She married Ransom Reid, Sr., Oneida's head mechanic. In 1881 she migrated to Santa Ana with her son Ransom Reid, Jr., and married D. Edson Smith.



Alfred E. and Elizabeth Mallory Hawley, married at Oneida in 1879, moved to Santa Ana in 1887. They purchased a sporting goods store from John P. Hutchins, also a former Oneida Perfectionist. Alfred became a leader of the Socialist party in Orange County and wrote a column for the Santa Ana Blade.

In Santa Ana the Marks family grouped for this portrait in the early twentieth century. Frederick (wearing hat) and Martha (in straight chair) were among the early Townerites who purchased land in Santa Ana under terms of an agreement signed at Oneida in 1881. Emerson Marks (leaning against post), born in Oneida in 1877 and a leading Santa Ana attorney, was appointed superior court judge of Orange County in 1925 and to the Fourth District Appellate Court in 1929. Ernest Marks (in profile), born on the Marks' ranch in 1887, farmed it until its sale in 1943. Allan Van Velzer (petting dog), Martha's son from a previous relationship, became a physician in Gardena, California.





Enjoying the baseball games at Cragin Meadow in the Oneida Community, Alfred Hawley organized his own team, called Hawley's Yellow Sox, and built a baseball park in the rear of his tract of land in Santa Ana.

purchased and then divided among the copartners. In subsequent decades it was sold, repurchased, and resold, sometimes to Townerites for a minimal amount, sometimes to "outsiders" for a handsome profit. In addition, other Oneida emigrants—including George A. Allen, John P. Hutchins, D. Edson Smith, Augusta E. Towner, and James W. Towner—purchased numerous nearby parcels of land, on a portion of which stand today's county court house and municipal buildings. The acquisition of this land provided the Townerites a strong base from which to exercise economic, social, and political power in their new community.²³

Not surprisingly, the Townerites' impact upon the Santa Ana community was beyond proportion to their numbers. For example, James Towner was appointed in 1889 by the governor of California to serve as chairman of the five-person commission directing the organization of the new Orange County out of the old Los Angeles

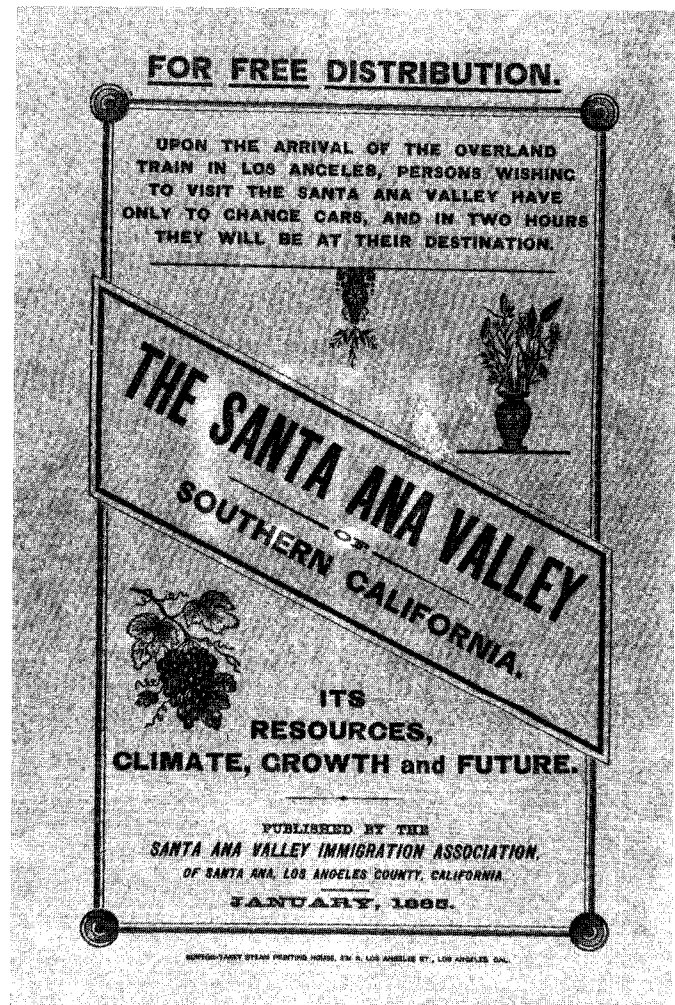
County.²⁴ In that same year, Towner was elected as the new county's first superior court judge, a position he held until 1896.²⁵ Other former Oneida colleagues actively worked in politics, the Unitarian church, agriculture, citrus farming, ranching, and commerce. Alfred E. Hawley, Edwin S. Nash, and D. Edson Smith played prominent roles in Socialist party politics in Orange County in the early twentieth century. When Hawley became head of the party, the county central committee met regularly in his retail store.²⁶ D. Edson Smith and Arthur Towner, James Towner's son, joined the Pomological and Agricultural Society of Orange County and in the late 1880s published an article in the *Rural Californian* entitled "How to Make a Living from Ten Acres." Smith himself farmed nine acres of deciduous fruits on the outskirts of Santa Ana. In addition, Harley Hamilton, the half-brother of Augusta Hamilton Towner, served as musical director of the Los Angeles

A typical promotional pamphlet for Santa Ana in the 1880s carried the following objective: "The dissemination of rational information concerning the advantages of the Santa Ana Valley, and the encouragement, by all proper and honorable measures, of immigration thereto."

Symphony Orchestra for nearly twenty years from 1894 to 1913, and Ransom Reid, Jr., born in Oneida in 1865, was responsible for establishing the city's water and sewer system and served as Santa Ana Water Superintendent from 1900 to 1920.²⁷

Throughout their lives, the Townerites in California remained loyal to each other, and relations between them and the Oneida Community continued for many years. Indeed, they were often referred to affectionately at Oneida as "the California colony." Through extensive landholdings, intermarriage, and common social, political, agricultural, commercial, and religious activities, if not through group living and publically-espoused pantagamy, the Townerites' former communal ties persisted in the Far West. We need to abandon, therefore, the notion of a permanent "breakup" of the Oneida Community.²⁸

In Robert V. Hine's pathbreaking book published in 1953, he explored the history of seventeen California utopian colonies ranging from Northern California's Icaria Speranza to Southern California's secular Llano del Rio and the Point Loma Theosophists in San Diego.²⁹ More recently, Kevin Starr, in his splendid book, *Americans and the California Dream, 1850-1915* (1973), called attention to the significant "counter-patterns" to the vast ranchos that characterized early land-use in California—the large landholdings that so aroused the moral indignation of social critics such as Henry George and Carey McWilliams. Starr points to the 1851 purchase of a 35,509-acre tract in the San Bernardino Valley by a group of Mormons, who carefully planned a landscaped town with a model irrigation system. Shortly thereafter, he notes, a group of German immigrants to San Francisco cooperatively purchased a Southern California tract from the former Rancho San Juan Cajón de Santa Ana and founded the colony of Anaheim. Furthermore, Starr documents that in 1874 a group from Indianapolis purchased part of the Rancho San Pascual at the western end of the San Gabriel Valley, where members built cottages



and planted extensive vineyards and orchards. In 1875 their settlement was named Pasadena. It was in these kinds of towns, Starr argues, that the Californians "lived both on the land and in community," surpassing the primitive economy and culture of the early ranchos by introducing irrigation systems, diversified crops, cooperative marketing, modern commercial practices, churches, schools, libraries, and concert halls.³⁰ To this growing list now must be added the contributions of the Townerites. In reconstructing this aspect of Southern Califor-

nia's social and economic history, therefore, historians would do well to examine Santa Ana not only as an arena of social change but as a case study of what Starr calls "a return of the middle class to the land."³¹

The photographs on pages 223 and 227 (top row) are courtesy the Oneida Community Historical Collections; on page 220, courtesy the Historical Collection, First American Title Insurance Company; on page 227 (left), courtesy Ms. E. A. (Pauline) Reuter, Tustin, California; on page 228 (below), Ms. Thelma Lillis, Santa Ana; on page 228 (top), Mr. Otto Hawley, Santa Ana; on page 230, Special Collections, University of California, Irvine.

Notes

1. The author expresses special appreciation to Nathaniel L. Bliss for joining in the quest to understand the meaning and relevance of Utopian Socialism. His suggestions and those of Professors Robert Hine and Laurence Veysey have been most helpful. As well, many Oneida descendants helpfully provided family photographs and other materials. Among the many accounts of the Oneida Community, see especially the following: John Humphrey Noyes, *History of American Socialisms* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1870); William A. Hinds, *American Communities* (Oneida, N.Y.: Office of the American Socialist, 1878); Robert Allerton Parker, *A Yankee Saint: John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1935); Maren Lockwood Carden, *Oneida: Utopian Community to Modern Corporation* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969); Constance Noyes Robertson, *Oneida Community: The Breakup, 1876-1881* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1972); and Robert David Thomas, *The Man Who Would Be Perfect: John Humphrey Noyes and the Utopian Impulse* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977). For more general treatments, see Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972); Laurence Veysey, *The Communal Experience: Anarchist and Mystical Counter-Cultures in America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973); and Michael Fellman, *The Unbounded Frame: Freedom and Community in Nineteenth Century American Utopianism* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973).
2. On Noyes' theological revisionism and on religious revivalism in America beginning in the 1830s, see the following: a series of essays titled "Perfectionism, the Antecedent of Communism," in the *Oneida Circular*, 5 (June-September, 1868); *Bible Communism* (Brooklyn: Office of the Circular, 1853); John Humphrey Noyes, *Salvation From Sin: The End of Christian Faith* (Oneida, N.Y., 1876); George Wallingford Noyes, ed., *Religious Experiences of John Humphrey Noyes* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1923); Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950); Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957); Norman Walter Haight, "Faith and Freedom in Christian Utopia: An Analysis of the Thought of John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Community" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Syracuse University, 1972); Laurence Veysey, ed., *The Perfectionists: Radical Social Thought in the North, 1815-1860* (New York: Wiley, 1973); and Robert S. Fogarty, "Oneida: A Utopian Search for Religious Security," *Labor History*, 14 (1973).
3. See the introduction by Murray Levine and Barbara Benedict Bunker to the reissue of *Mutual Criticism* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1975), especially pp. vii-ix.
4. The letter is quoted at length in Parker, *A Yankee Saint*, p. 44. Gates' magazine was called *Battle-Axe and Weapons of War*, from whose name the "Battle-Axe Letter" acquired its title.
5. Oneida Perfectionists were harshly critical of Mormonism, Fourierism, and Owenism for their alleged shortcomings on the "women question." See, for example, various articles in the *Oneida Circular* and the *American Socialist* (successor to the *Oneida Circular* in March, 1876): December 21, 1868; July 12, July 26, October 4, 1869; February 8, May 10, November 15, 1877. On polygamy, see *Bible Communism*, p. 84: "In following Christ we are further from the position of polygamists than ordinary society. It is plain that the fundamental principle of monogamy and polygamy is the same: to wit, the ownership of woman by man. The monogamist claims one woman as his wife—the polygamist, two or a dozen; but the essential thing, the bond of relationship constituting a marriage, in both cases is the same, namely, a claim of ownership." On Josiah Warren, see Yehosua Arieli, *Individualism and Nationalism in American Ideology* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1964), pp. 285-292, and Hal D. Sears, *The Sex Radicals: Free Love in High Victorian America* (Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1977), pp. 5, 156, 157. Published works on the Berlin Heights free-love community are rare, but see Kenneth William McKinley, "A Guide to the Communistic communities of Ohio," *The Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly*, 46 (1937): pp. 1-15; William F. Vartorella, "Free Love War Waged in Ohio," *Ohio Historical Society Echoes*, June, 1974, and Vartorella, "The Other 'Peculiar Institution': The Free Thought and Free Love Reform Press in Ohio During Rebellion and Reconstruction, 1861-1877" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio University, 1977). See note 14 for a brief discussion of the Oneidans' adamant rejection of sexual anarchy and free love.
6. *Oneida Circular*, April 27, 1874. Also see *Bible Communism*, pp. 26-38, 82-113.
7. See John Humphrey Noyes, *Male Continence* (Oneida: Office of the Oneida Circular, 1872).
8. On the Oneida Community's eugenics experiment, see E. Van de Warker, "A Gynecological Study of the Oneida Community," *American Journal of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women*, 17 (1884): pp. 790-795; Anita Newcomb McGee, "An Experiment in Human Stirpiculture," *The American Anthropologist*, 4 (October, 1891): pp. 320-324; Hilda Herrick Noyes and George Wallingford Noyes, "The Oneida Community Experiment in Stirpiculture," *Eugenics, Genetics, and the Family*, 1 (1923): pp. 374-386; Mary Bishop Ross, "The Kingdom of God Has Come," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, October, 1974, pp. 31-32; and Philip R. Wyatt, "John Humphrey Noyes and the Stirpiculture Experiment," *Journal of the History of Medicine*, 31 (January, 1976): pp. 55-56.
9. Albert T. Mollegen, "The Religious Basis of Western Socialism," in Donald Drew Egbert and Stow Persons, eds., *Socialism and American Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), p. 115.
10. V. F. Calverton, *Where Angels Dared to Tread: Socialist and Communist Utopian Colonies in the United States* (Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1942), p. 283.
11. Parker, *A Yankee Saint*, p. 267.

12. Robertson, *Oneida Community: The Breakup, 1876-1881*, pp. 14-21; Carden, *Oneida: Utopian Community to Modern Corporation*, p. 111.
 13. Fearing criminal action by a group of clergymen led by Professor John W. Mears of Hamilton College and unable to depend upon a united Oneida Community, Noyes secretly fled to the safety of Canada in late June, 1879. There, beginning in January, 1881, Noyes kept a "Niagara Journal," a remarkable document which apparently only Maren Lockwood Carden has incorporated into her analysis of the "breakup." In the summer of 1977, this author found this precious journal disintegrating in a basement repository in the Oneida Mansion House. The work is now properly housed in the Oneida Community Historical Collection.
 14. Noyes and his associates had long criticized free-love advocates such as Stephen Pearl Andrews, who was one of the first to apply Josiah Warren's doctrine of individual sovereignty to the "Realm of the Affections." The free-love cause eventually merged with spiritualism in the early 1850s, when the doctrine of "spiritual affinity" was introduced. This doctrine, founded on Charles Fourier's theory of passionate attraction, was sternly rejected by Oneida Perfectionists, who wished to stand well apart from sexual anarchism, Stephen Pearl Andrews, and his followers from Berlin Heights. In denying that the individual was sovereign in all relations, the Oneidans stressed instead the importance of collective commitment, responsibility, and religious unity. Because of this, the Towner group faced an uphill struggle in persuading the Oneidans of their acceptability as Bible Communists. Extant is extensive and revealing correspondence (some thirty-eight items) between Towner and members of his group, including his wife, Cinderella, his sister, Martha S. Reeve, and her husband, Gaylord W. Reeve, and the "Oneida family" in the period April, 1866, to December, 1867 (and published in the *Daily Journal of the Oneida Community* and the *O. C. Daily*). Towner, his wife, and his children alternately visited Oneida to be scrutinized as potential members. In November, 1866, the Towner clan even moved from Berlin Heights to Cleveland in order to demonstrate their rejection of free love and the principles of individual sovereignty. On November 29, 1866, after requesting Mutual Criticism, Towner wrote to the community: "I confess my besetting sins to have been willfulness, individual sovereignty, and of course infidelity. I hope to have repented of them all. . . ." The Oneida Community, in turn, sent representatives to Ohio to investigate Towner and his associates. But it was not until May, 1874, that the so-called "Cleveland Community" finally moved to Oneida as members. See *O. C. Annals*. On Andrews, see Madeleine B. Stern, *The Pantarch: A Biography of Stephen Pearl Andrews* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968), and Hal D. Sears, *The Sex Radicals*. For the attitudes of the Oneida Community toward Andrews and Berlin Heights, see statements in the following issues of the *Oneida Circular*: October 3, 1870; August 7, 1871; August 5, 1872; December 8, 1873; July 13, 1874; and June 14, 1877.
 15. It would appear from the *O. C. Annals* that Frederick Towner, the son of James and Cinderella, joined in October, 1872. He died in Oneida on June 9, 1875.
 16. See Spencer C. Olin, Jr., "The Anti-Noyes Faction: The Townerites and the 'Breakup' of the Oneida Community," a paper presented at a conference on utopias and communes held at the University of Nebraska at Omaha in October, 1978. Several essays on the rule of grace vs. the rule of law appear in the *Oneida Circular* in 1860s and 1870s. See, for example, the lecture by Mr. Hamilton reported in the September 10, 1866 issue: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Moses governed by law, precept, and rule. But Jesus Christ introduced a system of governing by grace and truth. . . . Law and fault-finding go together. . . ." In the *American Socialist*, see March 15, 1879: "The great mistake of the past, under the Fourier and Owen dispensation, was the attempt to manufacture Communities by the machinery of conventions, constitutions and By-Laws."
 17. Oneida Community migrants to Southern California in the 1880s (most lived in Santa Ana, while others resided in Los Angeles and Riverside) included:

George D. Allen Lillian (Towner) Allen Jared Allen (b. 1884) Rodney Allen (b. 1890) Harley Hamilton Harriet Mallory Hatch Julius Hawley Sarah Mallory Hawley Roswell Hawley Ida Blood Hawley Alfred Hawley Elizabeth Mallory Hawley Ralph Hawley Arline Hawley Otto Hawley John P. Hutchins Fanny Parker Hutchins Mary Blood Parker Hutchins Ellen F. Hutchins Ransom Reid, Jr. (son of Ellen F. Hutchins) Edward P. Inslee	Isabelle B. Inslee Frederick A. Marks Martha J. (Hawley) Marks Allan Van Velzer (son of Martha Marks) Emerson J. Marks Ernest Marks (b. 1887) Edwin S. Nash Martha (Towner) Reeve Nash Evan Rupert Nash D. Edson Smith Stella Worden Smith Eugene Deming Smith Henrietta Sweet James W. Towner Cinderella Sweet Towner Arthur Towner Augusta Hamilton Towner Esther (Abbott-Hamilton) Towner Heber Frederick Towner (b. 1882) Rutherford Towner Xarifa Towner
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- James Towner had several sisters, two of whom were part of the Berlin Heights group. Martha went with him to Oneida, where she married Gaylord W. Reeve and, later, Edwin S. Nash (with whom she came to Santa Ana). Maria stayed at Berlin Heights and married John Parker Lasley, with whom she moved to Santa Ana in 1887. They were accompanied by their five children: Emerson James, Chloe Frances, John Towner, Everett Parker, and Mary Elizabeth. See James W. Towner, *A Genealogy of the Towner Family* (Los Angeles: Times-Mirror Printing and Binding House, 1910), pp. 150-151.
18. In August, 1879, Noyes proposed the abandonment of Complex Marriage, a proposal which required careful deliberation by community members. Hinds and Towner were among a few to oppose Noyes in this issue. Hinds is quoted as declaring: "[As] communism and marriage are based upon fundamentally different principles, it seems to me that the introduction of marriage into the Community is a perilous undertaking that may endanger, sooner or later, the most important features of our Community life." In a paper submitted to the Community on August 27, Towner stated his position: "I do not believe in marriage as a remedy for our troubles. I do not believe that marriage and communism can exist together. The only question with me is whether or not this proposed change will prove to be an inlet of the spirit of marriage which will overcome that of communism and at no late day disintegrate the Community. . . ." Despite the opposition of Hinds and Towner, the community voted to endorse Noyes' proposal. Henceforth, members were to return to monogamy or celibacy. See Robertson, *Oneida Community: The Breakup, 1876-1881*, pp. 153-159.
 19. David J. Pivar, *Purity Crusade: Sexual Morality and Social Control, 1868-1900* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973), p. 43. Also see Charles A. Cannon, "The Awesome Power of Sex: The Polemical Campaign Against Mormon Polygamy," *Pacific Historical Review*, 43 (February, 1974): pp. 61-82, and James L. Clayton, "The Supreme Court, Polygamy, and the Enforcement of Morals in 19th Century America," a paper delivered at the Pacific Coast Branch Meeting of the American Historical Association in August, 1978.

20. Santa Ana *Weekly Standard*, June 9, 1882.
21. In the late-1850s, a group of German merchants in San Francisco decided to purchase a tract of land in Southern California to engage in grape raising. They organized the Los Angeles Vineyard Company and purchased 1,200 acres of Rancho San Juan Cajón de Santa Ana, naming their new colony "Anaheim" (or home by the Santa Ana River). For twenty-five years, Anaheim was the greatest wine producing district in California, but in 1885 the vines were destroyed by a disease known as *Phyloxera*. See Leon O. Whitsell, *One Hundred Years of Freemasonry in California*, vol. 4 (Grand Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of California, 1950). Perhaps this earlier collective enterprise helped attract Townnerites to California, as might have Charles Nordoff's description of the region in *California, For Health, Pleasure, and Residence* (1872). Furthermore, a similar communistic, spiritualist society called "The Societas Fraternia" was organized about four miles northeast of Anaheim in 1878. Subjected to public criticism, it soon disbanded. See the *Anaheim Gazette*, May 10, 1879, and Charles Herbert Rinehart, "A Study of the Anaheim Community" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 1933), p. 56.
22. Sylvia Noyes Paquette, daughter of Dr. Hilda Herrick Noyes, brought this land-acquisition agreement to my attention and offered other advice and assistance.
23. Research assistant John R. Shaw helped examine hundreds of Townnerite land transactions for a period of twenty years. Their disposition of land clearly indicates not only willingness to favor fellow Townnerites but exceedingly sound business judgment. On one occasion, George D. Allen, the West Coast agent for Oneida Community, Ltd. reported to William A. Hinds: "Just sold my lot on 4th St. that I paid \$467.92 for a few weeks ago for \$1,000 to a gentleman from Chicago." See Allen to Hinds, November 12, 1886, William A. Hinds Papers, Oneida Community Historical Collection, Kenwood, New York. The land transaction data are housed in the Santa Ana Recorder's Office.
24. On the various attempts to achieve county division, see J. M. Guinn, "History of the Movements for the Division of Los Angeles County," *Annual Publication of the Historical Society of Southern California* (1888-89), pp. 25-29; Samuel Armor, *History of Orange County, California* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Co., 1921), pp. 1-2, 34-35; Owen C. Coy, *California County Boundaries* (Berkeley: California Historical Survey Commission, 1923), pp. 33, 39, 41; and James Sleeper, *Turn the Rascals Out: The Life and Times of Orange County's Fighting Editor, Dan M. Baker* (Trabuco Canyon, Calif.: California Classics, 1973), pp. 97-110. Also see various issues of the *Anaheim Gazette* and the *Santa Ana Standard* from March-June, 1889.
25. An initial review of Townner's legal opinions, including those appealed to the state supreme court, reveals a high degree of competency, especially in the areas of torts and contracts.
26. See Alfred E. Hawley to Hinds, November 6, 1906, William A. Hinds Papers. For information on the Nash family, see the Evan Rupert Nash Papers, The Division of Special Collections, Stanford University. These papers are the most complete collection of materials relating to members of the California colony other than those at Oneida.
27. Oral history interview with Ms. Pauline (Reid) Reuter, daughter of Ransom Reid, Jr., December 17, 1976.
28. Alfred Hawley, for example, wrote in 1887 that: "The two boxes sent us March 8th came to hand April 9th. . . . Many times did tears spring to our eyes and lumps rise in our throats while unpacking those boxes [of clothing and money]. . . . If any of you come to California for a visit—you will find a welcome at our home and a stopping place." See Alfred E. Hawley to William A. Hinds and friends, April 13, 1887, Hinds Papers. Furthermore, on many occasions, long-time friends from Oneida visited members of the California colony, who, in turn, made journeys back to Oneida. See *The Kenwood Chronicle*, March 31, 1894, and September, 1898, and *The Quadrangle*, April, 1908. Townner himself returned to Oneida in 1897 and again in the summer of 1911, when he spent six weeks there with his daughter, Lillian, her husband, George Allen, and her children. Joining them were Frederick and Martha Marks. See *The Quadrangle*, May, June, July, August, and September, 1911. Townner, who died November 19, 1913 (at the age of 90) and was cremated in Los Angeles, evidently wished his remains and those of his immediate family to be returned to his beloved Oneida. Today a Townner gravestone rests in the Oneida community graveyard in Kenwood.
29. Robert V. Hine, *California's Utopian Colonies* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1953).
30. Kevin Starr, *Americans and the California Dream, 1850-1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 200-209.
31. For recent books and articles that might serve as research models, see the following: Stuart Blumin, *The Urban Threshold: Growth and Change in a Nineteenth-Century American Community* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976); Stephanie Grauman Wolf, *Urban Village: Population, Community, and Family Structure in Germantown, Pennsylvania, 1683-1800* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Oliver Knight, "Toward an Understanding of the Western Town," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 4 (January, 1973): 27-42; Gilbert Stelter, "The City and Westward Expansion: A Western Case Study," *ibid.*, 4 (April, 1973): 187-202; Don Harrison Doyle, "Social Theory and New Communities in Nineteenth-Century America," *ibid.*, 8 (April, 1977): 151-165; David Hornbeck and Mary Tucey, "The Submergence of a People: Migration and Occupational Structure in California, 1850," *Pacific Historical Review*, 46 (August, 1977): 471-484; and David C. Hammack, "Problems in the Historical Study of Power in the Cities and Towns of the United States, 1800-1960," *American Historical Review*, 83 (April, 1978): 323-349.

George Roe and California's Centennial of Light



One of the state's first displays of decorative outdoor lighting was created on Market Street for a meeting of the International Order of Oddfellows in San Francisco in 1904.

This year's nationwide Centennial of Light celebration marks an important date. One hundred years ago in Menlo Park, New Jersey, Thomas Alva Edison demonstrated the world's first practical incandescent light bulb.

In September, 1979, California also celebrates its own contribution to the development of electric lighting. A century ago San Francisco became the first city in the United States to have a central generating station which distributed electricity to the premises of customers.

San Franciscans, of course, had a modicum of familiarity with electricity in 1879; a few buildings boasted arc lighting supplied by primitive individual generators. But in September of that year, the infant California Electric Light Company sent electricity to twenty-one sputtering arc lamps from the first central power station in the United States.

The California Electric Light Company, ancestor of today's Pacific Gas and Electric Company, holds the distinction of being the first electric utility in the United States. Three years prior to the opening of Edison's Pearl Street Station in New York City, it began selling electricity to commercial establishments. The story of this signal event follows.

The celebration in 1979 of California's Centennial of Light easily might not have happened. One day in San Francisco a century ago, a young entrepreneur named George H. Roe called his business partners together to witness the test of what they hoped would be a workable dynamo for generating electricity. Roe applied power from a small coal-fired steam boiler to the machine he had designed and built. It responded by turning at the rate of 1,200 revolutions per minute but did not produce electric current. Unwilling to admit failure and "endeavoring to taste enough current to hang a hope upon," Roe put both ends of the wire in his mouth,¹ but to no avail. The gesture was one of scientific ignorance rather than foolhardiness.

Had George Roe succeeded in his attempt to generate electricity, his career would have ended abruptly—with a funeral.² Certainly we would not be marking the Centennial of Roe's California Electric Light Company, the first electric company ancestor of today's Pacific Gas and Electric Company.³

The deficiency of Roe's first experimental dynamo eventually was explained; a decorative metal band placed around the bobbin of the machine's armature had neutralized the power-generating magnetism. Not until later when the band was removed as the dynamo was being scrapped did the machine generate electricity.⁴

Roe entered the field of electric generation by chance, for like most San Franciscans, he knew little about electricity. He was an ambitious young Canadian bent on making his mark in commercial San Francisco who, with a partner, had started the money brokerage firm of Roe and Plummer.

One day a Wallace-Farmer brand dynamo and lamp came into the firm's hands by default on a loan, and when Roe and Plummer decided to go separate ways, Roe received the seemingly useless electric equipment in his share of the firm's assets. When the generator proved unsatisfactory under testing, Roe ordered a new model made. Then he designed another, the one which almost proved his undoing. Although the machine failed, Roe remained determined to become the pioneering owner of an electric company, and his instincts proved right.

In the 1870s, only gas lighting brightened San Francisco's dark nights. Gold rush residents had walked in near darkness, lighting their homes and an occasional street with oil lamps and candles. Among the Forty-

Writer and editor Patricia G. Sikes, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate with highest honors of Smith College, has an MA degree in English literature from Duke University. She taught in the English department at the University of California at Davis for five years and served for six years as Research Secretary to Governor Edmund G. Brown, Sr. Since 1967 she has been a writer, editor, and research specialist for Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

In 1880 gas lights illuminated the facade of this shop on Market between Third and Fourth streets, only a few steps from the site of the original generating station of the California Electric Light Company.
I. W. Taber Photograph.

Entrepreneur George H. Roe experimented with dynamos to produce electricity and later founded the nation's first electric utility.



niners, however, was a machinist and foundry worker named Peter Donahue, who was destined to bring the first gas lighting to San Francisco. A failure at gold mining, Donahue had dreamed bold ideas about San Francisco's future. Climbing the sand hills west of Kearny Street with a companion and looking down at the young town, Donahue reflected: "This is going to be a great city at no distant day; there will have to be gasworks and waterworks here, and whoever has faith enough to embark in either of these enterprises will make money."⁵

In 1850, the city's only street lighting was provided by oil lamps installed along Merchant Street in October of that year. Accordingly, Donahue convinced his two brothers that they should embark on a project to bring

gas to the city. None of them, however, knew about manufacturing gas, an unknown industry in the West. (Baltimore boasted a gas company in 1816 and Boston and New York in 1822 and 1823, but it was 1850 before midwestern towns like Chicago could generate gas light.)

Undaunted, the adventurous Donahues founded the San Francisco Gas Company in 1852. It was the first gas company in the West and the first gas predecessor of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. The company was given a franchise by the city council to erect a gasworks for extracting the gas from coal, to lay pipes in the street, and to install street lamps for lighting the city with "brilliant gas" at a cost of 32½ cents per lamp per night. Householders, the charter read, were to receive light "at such rates as will make it to their interest to use it in preference to any other material."⁶

San Francisco's new gas plant was ready for operation on February 11, 1854, and gas was immediately released into the pipes. A reporter for the *Daily Alta California* described the results:

San Francisco by gas-light—Last evening, between six and seven o'clock the streets of San Francisco were lighted with gas for the first time. . . . It was not a very favorable evening for the exhibition of the gas-light, as its brilliancy paled somewhat beneath the rays of Luna, who exhibited a full face last evening, and seemed to be enjoying a sort of a quiet laugh at the gas-light. Nevertheless, a cheerfulness seemed to pervade the streets that has never been among us before.⁷

San Francisco's gaslights won immediate public favor. The demand grew steadily, from 237 customers in the first year of operation to 563 in 1855. It was long after electricity had proved a better means of lighting San Francisco, in fact, that the last of the city's outdoor gaslights were quenched on December 27, 1930.

The challenge of understanding and using electricity, of course, had fascinated men long before Roe's and Edison's time. In 600 B.C., the Greek philosopher, Thales, first observed static electricity when he absent-mindedly stroked a polished piece of iridescent amber and found



that it would first attract, then repel, light objects like lint, chaff, and feathers. Over the intervening centuries, many others added to the growing body of knowledge about electricity. For instance, Queen Elizabeth's physician, William Gilbert, repeated Thales' experiment. In his book, *De Magnete*, he observed the fundamentals of magnetism, naming the mysterious force "elektron," the Greek word for amber.

In the eighteenth century, Francis Hauksbee used electricity to produce a glow, which he called "electric light," in a hollow, glass globe emptied of air. Benjamin Franklin, in his historic 1752 experiment conducted

during a thunderstorm, identified lightning as electricity. In 1800, Alessandro Volta invented the first device to produce a continuous current of electricity. Eight years later, Sir Humphrey Davy used Volta's discovery to produce the arc light. The principle of electromagnetic induction, which led to the development of the dynamo as a source of electric power, was discovered by Michael Faraday, Davy's pupil. With the mid-nineteenth century invention in Europe of the Gramme dynamo, a machine capable of producing sustained electric current, the use of arc lights began to grow.

Being large and extremely bright, arc lights proved

Completed in 1875, Ralston's Palace Hotel was wired throughout with many battery-operated electrical conveniences, including fire alarms and clocks. In the foreground of this 1877 photograph is a gas streetlight.

best suited for streets and other outdoor illumination. In the 1860s they began to appear in European cities, lighting the streets of Paris by the 1870s. In 1878, arc lights illuminated a field in England where 30,000 people watched the world's first evening football game.⁸

A well-advertised public demonstration of arc lighting occurred at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition of 1876, and John Wanamaker's Philadelphia department store quickly added electric arc illumination. San Franciscans witnessed demonstrations of arc lamps in the same period, and in 1879 George Roe's California Electric Light Company began its operation with the capacity of lighting twenty-one arc lamps.

But the bright light cast by arc lamps was less than satisfactory for most purposes. Robert Louis Stevenson called it "nightmare light" and urged: "Such a light as this should shine forth only on murders and public crime, or along the corridors of lunatic asylums, a horror to heighten horror. To look at it only once is to fall in love with gas."⁹ As well, the arc lamps' carbon electrodes burned out easily and required constant attendance, and their bulk and excessive brilliance made them unsuitable for use in kitchens and parlors.

Acknowledging these problems, inventors such as Edison continued to seek a better alternative, one which would be effective, reliable, safe, and cheap. They achieved tantalizing partial successes with incandescent lamps, but on October 21, 1879, Edison perfected the first practical incandescent lamp. Edison's lamp, described as "red hot hairpins in a glass bottle," consisted of a loop of carbonized cotton thread mounted in a vacuum which prevented oxidation. It burned forty hours until Edison purposely shattered the bulb to make further tests on the filament. While other men also had experimented with incandescent lamps, the distinction of Edison's

approach was that from the first he envisioned the incandescent lamp as part of an entire lighting system which would include dynamos, switches, wiring, and meters.

By the time of Edison's brilliant contributions, San Franciscans already had been alerted to the great potential of electric lighting. Father Joseph M. Neri, a Jesuit priest and professor of natural philosophy at St. Ignatius College, forebear of the University of San Francisco, had conducted a series of lighting experiments at the college on Market Street between Fourth and Fifth streets. In 1871 Neri installed an electric light in a Market Street window for the Silver Jubilee of Pope Pius IX. On that night, twenty thousand people marching in a night parade were impressed by the remarkable lighting, and the college historian noted that "the parlors, halls and rooms facing Market Street were bright with gas jets, while from the largest of the windows the electric light sent forth its beams, lighting up Market Street and the adjoining buildings." Three years later Father Neri was honored by a gift from the Compagnie l'Alliance in France of a large electromagnetic generating machine that had been used during the siege of Paris in 1871. He later wired this generator to a powerful searchlight, which was mounted on the bell tower of the college to give light "such as to be seen at a distance of two hundred miles."¹⁰

In 1875, a year after Father Neri received his electromagnetic generator from France, San Francisco's magnificent Palace Hotel opened its doors. This great hostelry built by William C. Ralston was the first public building to dramatize the potential of electric lighting for appreciative westerners.

Ralston had held court in San Francisco from 1860 to 1875 like a golden prince of the young city. Beginning life as a ship's carpenter and a clerk on Mississippi River boats, Ralston journeyed to San Francisco, where he prospered mightily and founded the Bank of California.

Ralston was at the peak of his powers in 1875 when



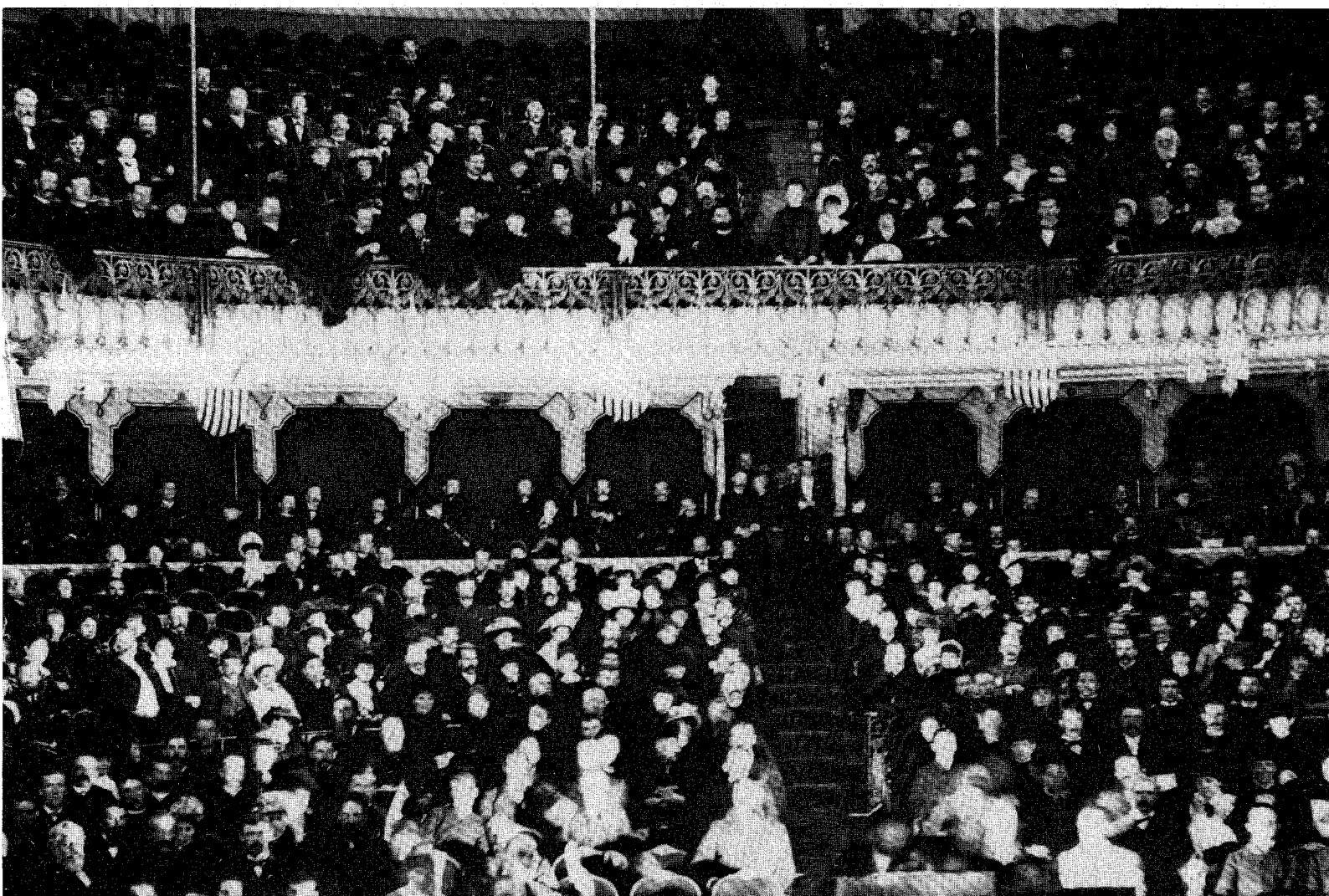
the city's financial climate turned uncertain in the aftermath of the discovery of the silver mines of the Comstock Lode. Bonanza stocks were under attack on the morning of August 26, 1875, when rumors began circulating about the Bank of California, which was deeply involved in financing the silver mines of Virginia City. In the afternoon, President Ralston walked from his private office to the counter and ordered payments to stop. The next morning, the directors of the bank found Ralston's financial dealings had seriously depleted the bank's funds, and they demanded and received his resignation. Ralston's career was at an end.¹¹

Later in the same day, the young entrepreneur George Roe called at the bank to withdraw a draft which he had deposited in the bank upon his arrival in San Francisco. Elbowing his way through the crowd, he asked for a personal interview with Ralston. Despite the pandemonium, Roe was admitted to Ralston's office. There the young man asked Ralston to certify his check and

the sympathetic Ralston complied, giving what was probably the last order of his life. Within an hour he was dead, a suicide or accident victim on his daily swim in the bay's frigid waters.¹²

Senator William C. Sharon of Nevada assumed ownership of Ralston's nearly completed Palace Hotel, and within a few weeks, a splendid banquet honoring General Philip Sheridan was held in the grand hotel whose "like had never been seen in the West." Standing "seven stories high and nearly one-quarter of a mile in circumference on a site worth \$400,000 alone," according to the hotel's historian, the building boasted eight hundred rooms and its dining room was furnished with "9,000 cuspidors, 8,800 side dishes, 8,000 vegetable dishes, and 4,000 cups and saucers. It cost \$5,000,000."¹³

A supplement to a weekly newspaper claimed that the Palace Hotel was "the greatest caravansary in the world." The headlines read: "Its Wonders—Its Promenades Amidst Tropical Verdure—Its Enormous



Proportions—Splendid Appointments—Richly Furnished Apartments—The Glorious View from its Summit—Electric Bells Everywhere—The Genius of W. C. Ralston Illustrated.”¹⁴

Of particular pride was the Palace’s electrical equipment, which was described in detail in the *San Francisco News Letter*:

Electricity is now universally used in every well-appointed hotel and private residence, and the clumsy, old-fashioned bell-pulls and mechanical bells which are never in order when wanted are things of the past. The electrical work in the Palace is a marvel of ingenuity and good workmanship. A touch upon a neat button in your room displays your number on an annunciator at the servants’ office on the same floor, rings a bell to attract attention, and then moves an indicator in the general office, thus enabling the clerks to keep the bell-boys on every floor under constant surveillance. There is also in each room a mercurial fire-alarm, in connection with the same communicators, which sounds an alarm at the office whenever the temperature reaches 120 deg. Fahrenheit. . . . It is a sleepless watchman which stands guard

day and night and should be in every room of every building. The electrical clocks are a [nother] feature. There are sixteen large and handsome time dials, running in perfect unison, and controlled by Field’s patent electric regulator. The entire electrical system embraces 125 miles of insulated wires and the machinery described, and the perfection of the work is shown by the fact that it is operated perfectly by three small cups of battery.¹⁵

The inventive spirit which characterized San Francisco’s interest in electricity continued at high pitch after the opening of the Palace. In 1878 Charles de Young, co-publisher of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, returned from an exposition in Paris with a Gramme generator and two Jablochhoff “candles” or arc lamps which the Russian inventor had asked de Young to introduce in the United States. Accordingly, the equipment was installed in the *Chronicle*’s new building at Bush and Kearny streets. The site received notice as “one of the brightest as well as handsomest in the city by reason of the five electric globes that stand like sentinels along the curbstones.”¹⁶

Electric arc lighting is featured in this souvenir photograph of the audience in Baldwin's Theatre. The photograph was made "by electric light" on Friday evening, April 25, 1884.

By the late 1870s, arc light generators and lamps had become available for commercial use in the United States. Charles F. Brush, an engineer employed by the Ohio-based Cleveland Telegraph Supply Company, had obtained a patent on his first dynamo in 1877, and he soon improved the design of both the generator and the arc lamp. Early in 1878, the Telegraph Supply Company began manufacturing the Brush equipment for commercial distribution.

In April, 1878, San Franciscans were invited to witness an exhibition of the light produced by the Brush dynamo and lamp at Mechanics' Pavilion. When William Sharon learned that the Brush generators were available, he ordered two arc lamps hung in the courtyard of the Palace Hotel so that it might outshine all competitors. Soon he added a large dynamo and more lamps. San Francisco thereby became one of the first American cities in which the Brush lighting system was installed.

Pleased with his Brush system, Sharon wrote on April 24, 1879, to the Telegraph Supply Company to express his satisfaction. "Gentlemen," he testified,

I have been using ten Electric Lights at the Palace Hotel, furnished from one No. 4 and one No. 5 Brush machine, using about ten horse-power. The lights are placed as follows: Two 3,000-candle lamps in the Court, displacing 510 gas jets; two 1,000- and one 3,000-candle lamps in the grand dining room, displacing 280 gas jets; one 1,000-candle lamp in the restaurant, displacing 150 gas jets; one 1,000-candle lamp in the office, displacing 100 gas jets; one 1,000-candle lamp in kitchen, displacing 20 gas jets; one 1,000-candle in bar room, displacing 25 gas jets; one 3,000-candle lamp in front of the hotel. The lamps in the dining room are switched from there to the front of the hotel, and to the bar room after the dinner hour, and all are working to our entire satisfaction. We feel free to state that the Brush Electric Light is a cheap, practical light to use where much light is needed.¹⁷

Sharon's letter was reprinted in 1881 in the company's promotional literature with the following addendum: "We also light, with equal success, the Baldwin Hotel at San Francisco. For hotel offices, corridors, dining

rooms, etc., it is especially valuable and insures a great saving over gas."¹⁸

San Francisco's nearby Baldwin Hotel was another extravagant expression of the commercial exuberance of the seventies. Built at Powell and Market streets in 1877 by Elias J. (Lucky) Baldwin, a brickmaker and hotel-keeper who made his first fortune on the mining exchange by clever scheming and luck, the hotel later installed its own lighting plant on Stevenson Street between Fifth and Sixth streets. In July, 1888, a Westinghouse alternating-current generator for the first time brought the glow of thousands of lights to the luxurious appointments of Baldwin's well-known inn.

San Francisco's hotels may take credit for introducing the pleasing glow of electricity to city residents, but it was the distribution of the Brush-system generators in San Francisco which provided the real catalyst for the development of electrical systems in the area. This was accomplished by William Kerr, who represented the Cleveland manufacturing company which had secured from Charles F. Brush the right to manufacture all the inventor's patents and which thereafter changed its corporate name to Brush Electric Company.

Soon William Kerr began promoting the new electric lighting apparatus for San Franciscans. A typical modest advertisement appearing in the *Mining and Scientific Press* announced: "Electric Light, Brush Patents, The Best, Cheapest, Cleanest, and Most Powerful Light in the World."¹⁹

Kerr's promotion of the Brush arc-lighting system coincided with George Roe's increasing determination to found a pioneering electrical company in San Francisco. Roe's gamble, however, was that lighting could be distributed successfully to customers from a central generating station.

Roe—in association with Messrs. John Bensley, O. F. Willey, J. R. Hardenbergh and R. A. Robinson—incorporated the California Electric Light Company with offices at 427 Montgomery Street on June 30, 1879. The company observed in its prospectus that electric light was not yet “offered for domestic purposes, because in dwellings it is not as cheap as gas or oil and is not yet adapted to such uses.”²⁰ For the time being, the company’s attention remained focused on the Brush arc-lighting system operating on individual business premises. William Kerr was invited to join forces with the new electric utility, and in return for the generating equipment he could procure, he received stocks and a directorship in the company.

The Brush lighting system helped San Franciscans welcome former President Ulysses S. Grant in September, 1879, in a celebration marked by delirious enthusiasm. According to an account in *Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*:

The city was brilliantly illuminated and rockets filled the air. The colored balls from Roman candles seemed to rain down from heaven, and a shower of flowers descended from every housetop and balcony along the route. . . . The streets were made as bright as day by the electric light, and the decorations, fantastic and beautiful as they were under the glare of the sun, looked still more pleasing, rich and elegant under the soft and mellow light of the great lanterns which the greatest of modern inventors has given us.²¹

Another account claimed that the “electric lights in many places rendered the scene brighter and lighter than the sunniest noon.”²²

Inside the hotel, the blazing lights made the welcome even more dramatic. The reporter for *Leslie’s Illustrated* enthusiastically wrote that “the scene within the immense court of the Palace Hotel on the night when General Grant arrived was of surpassing beauty. Electric lights and 500 gas jets lit up the vast interior with a brilliant glow.”²³

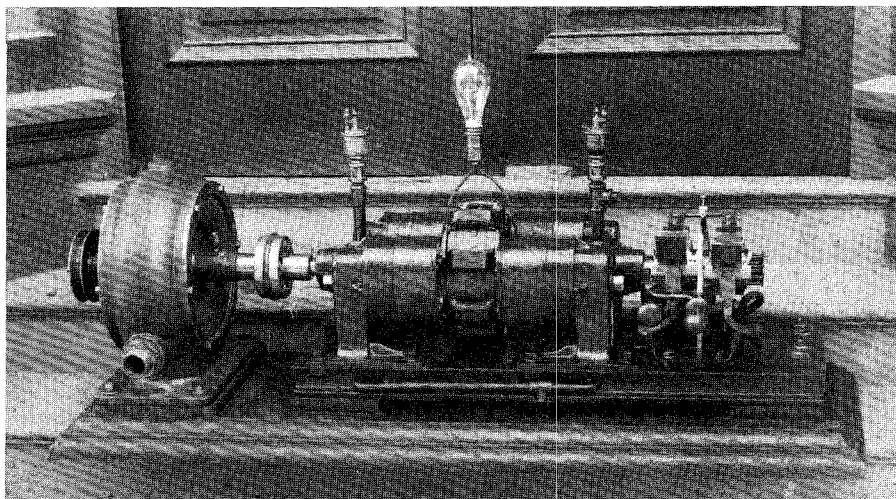
President Grant’s historic visit to San Francisco made

the city aware of the beauty and potential uses of electric light as never before. The public interest aroused by the visit was opportune for the California Electric Light Company, which was just then beginning operation of the first central generating station.

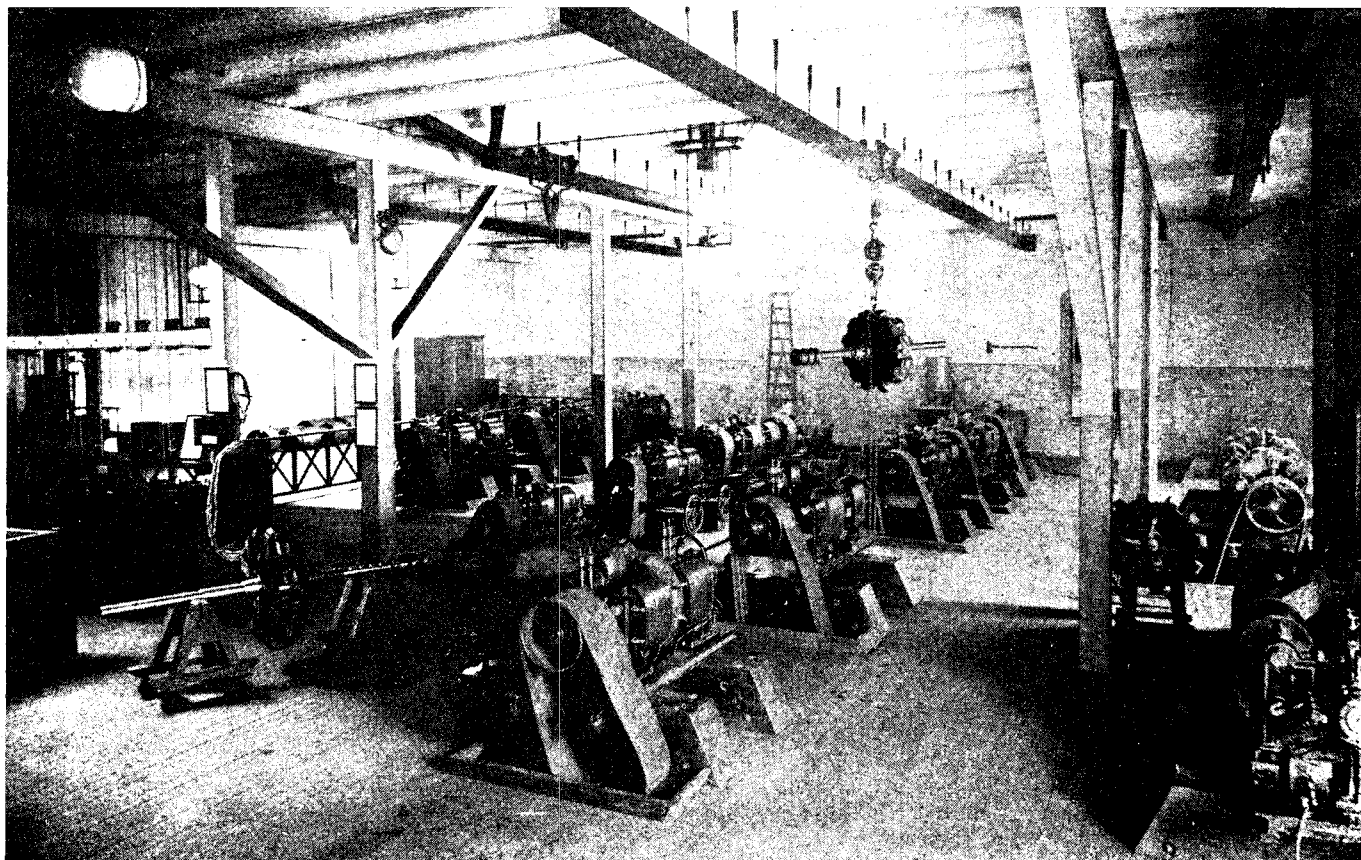
When completed, the company’s entire electric installation consisted of two Brush arc-light dynamos, one able to run sixteen lights and the other five. To house the Brush machines, the new electric utility erected a small frame building in the rear of the lot at the southwest corner of Fourth and Market streets. This undistinguished building housed what is believed to be the nation’s first central station for the sale and distribution of electric light. Electric lights were used in Philadelphia, San Francisco, and in other places in 1879 where power was available through individual generators, but the California Electric Light Company building was the first erected for the sole purpose of selling and distributing electric lighting to customers throughout a city.

When the plant began serving clients in September, 1879, it offered light from sundown to midnight with no service on Sundays or holidays. Among its first customers were the Hastings clothing store at Sutter and Montgomery streets and the Andrews Diamond Palace on Montgomery north of California Street. As Roe and Kerr expected, the opportunity to purchase electricity was welcomed in San Francisco, even at a flat charge of \$10 per lamp per week. In January, 1880, the company added four more generators with a capacity of 100 lights to meet the growing demand.

On April 24, this first plant was destroyed by fire, and a new plant was built at 117 O’Farrell Street. Resuming lighting service, the growing company prospered. Within two years, however, the needs of San Francisco’s businesses for electric lighting had increased to the limit of the O’Farrell Street plant’s capacity. A new and larger installation was built, the first of many expansions by the utility. San Francisco’s first electric street light was erected in 1883 in front of the



This Brush dynamo, installed in 1886 at the Inglenook vineyard in the Napa Valley, was like the Brush arc light machines used by Roe in the first central generating station in late 1879. After that plant burned in April, 1880, Roe's California Electric Light Company built this plant on O'Farrell Street.





Suspended from the frame of the Palace Hotel's glass skylight were two large arc light chandeliers installed in 1878 by Senator Sharon. The lights are barely visible in this photograph by I. W. Taber.

city hall on a tall mast carrying four 4,000-candlepower lamps. In the outlying residential areas of the city, gas lighting continued to be the rule.

The lower-illumination incandescent lamps perfected by Edison in 1879 were not readily available until the early 1880s on the Pacific Coast. The first store to adopt the Edison lamps, the Rosenthal shoe store on Kearny Street, installed in 1887 a series of eight incandescent lamps fed by an arc circuit in each of its two display windows. The following year, forty lamps arranged in

five series from an arc circuit were installed in the Bush Street Theater. In 1888 the California Electric Light Company installed the first dynamo for incandescent service in its new office building on Stevenson Street.

By the late 1880s, the electricity industry was burgeoning across the nation, but electricity in the home remained a rarity. Central utilities such as the California Electric Light Company usually sold complete service, and it was prohibitively expensive to wire an entire home and install chandeliers, lamps, and meters. Roe's

residence at 2618 Pacific in San Francisco may have been the first dwelling in California lighted by electricity, but home lighting by electricity was uncommon in California residences until well into the 1890s.²⁴

Electrical service to Northern and Central California farms also dates from this decade. In 1898, the first electric irrigation pump was put into operation by the Marysville Gas and Electric Company on the property of grape-grower J. W. Onstott near Yuba City.

The desire for electric lighting spread rapidly throughout Northern California, and George Roe encouraged this development as controller of the territorial rights to the Brush electrical equipment. As incandescent lamps became available, his California Electric Light Company began supplying service for residences.

One of the earliest developed electric appliances was the sewing machine, which was made possible by a battery-powered motor invented in 1886. Electric fans came into use by 1901, the first commercially successful electric range in 1908, and an electric washing machine in 1910. Electric irons and toasters were introduced in the same period. A Chicago businessman designed the first electric blanket in 1912 for a New York tuberculosis sanatorium, but it was 1926 before an electric refrigerator was installed in the White House.

In California, the cities of San Jose, Oakland, and Sacramento had established electric generating plants in the early and mid-1890s. Soon people across the state welcomed the new age of electric lighting. When hydroelectric power from the Sierra reached Oakland in 1901 and San Francisco in 1902, electric rates began to drop, and residential use to grow.

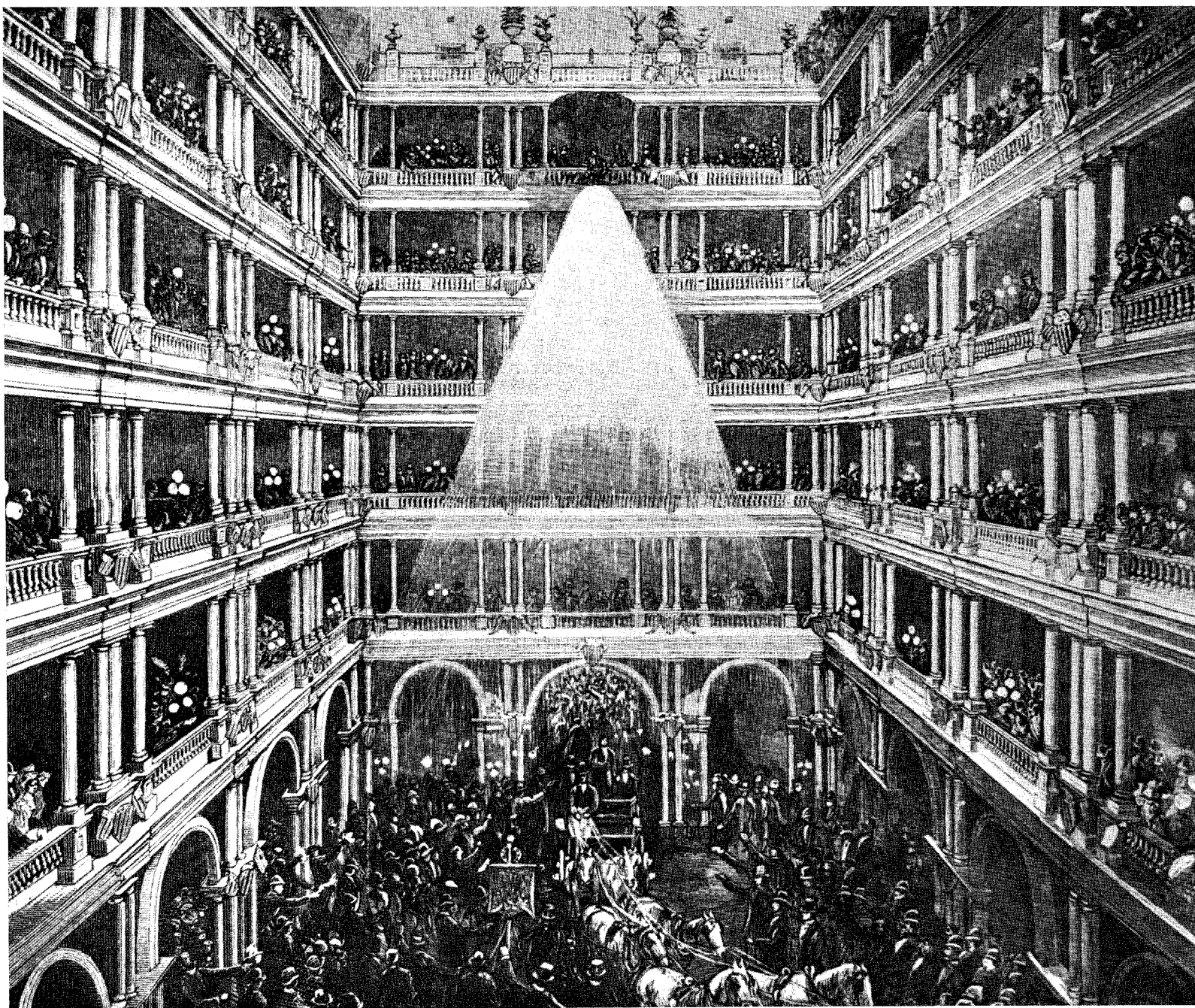
George Roe, as company incorporator and vendor of generators and lamps, was involved in the establishment of some seventeen electric companies in Northern California towns and cities, all of which ran their generators

on steam power. Roe also sold more than fifty electric plants for private use in mills, mines, and other industries.

At first Roe's pioneer company faced competition only from private generators in offices or factories. In 1887, the first serious commercial contender appeared on the scene. Mining engineer Augustus J. Bowie headed the Electric Improvement Company, and Fred Sharon of the Palace Hotel family was one of the leading stockholders. Heated competition between the companies ended in 1892 when the challenger sold its San Francisco properties to the California Electric Light Company.

The victor was already engaged in corporate battle, however, with a much more serious contender—the powerful Edison General Electric Company of New York which owned the rights to Edison's patents. In mid-1890, representatives of the J. P. Morgan-backed company arrived in San Francisco to look into the possibility of setting up a rival utility company. Roe reacted quickly to the threat and traveled to New York to negotiate. After nearly a year, an agreement was reached, and the Edison Light and Power Company was incorporated in San Francisco on July 1, 1891. The new company, which held exclusive rights to the Edison patents within a radius of one hundred miles of the city, purchased the California Electric Light Company by an exchange of stock. Roe, who had been manager for twelve years of the firm he founded in 1879, became president of the new company. Its achievement was recognized two years later in the *San Francisco Evening Bulletin* in an article headlined: "Power and Light—Great Plant of the Edison Company An Establishment of Wonderful Magnitude. Its Growth from Small Beginnings to Mammoth Proportions—Magnificent Machinery and Perfected System." The article went on to note that "The Edison Light and Power Company had modest beginnings. It has grown from the acorn to the stately oak. It has rendered great services to San Francisco. . . . The history of its birth and growth is an open book."²⁵

During the gala reception for Ulysses S. Grant at the Palace Hotel in September, 1879, light from 500 gas jets and two carbon arc lamps illuminated the courtyard. An artist sketched this great Palace moment as General Grant rode in state into the Grand Court, his carriage drawn by a team of snow-white horses.



By the early 1890s, George Roe's tiny California Electric Light Company had become a strong, functioning utility. Roe himself was honored in the San Francisco business and social world and respected as a civic leader and a patron of the arts. His career, however, moved to an untimely end. Late in 1894, he became ill, went to New York City for medical treatment, and died there at the age of forty-two.

Roe's company continued, merging in 1896 with the San Francisco Gas Company to become the San Francisco Gas and Electric Company. It was a cornerstone of today's Northern and Central California combination utility, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, which was incorporated on October 10, 1905.

George Roe was not a glamorous figure in the San Francisco of the 1870s. He displayed neither the flamboyance of Baldwin and Ralston, nor the creative genius of Thomas Edison. But Roe's California Electric Light Company, started with just two generators capable of lighting twenty-one lamps, helped bring about the dawn of the electric age in California and the West. It was Roe's company, opened for business 100 years ago, that evolved into the electric system which today brings light to more than nine million Californians.

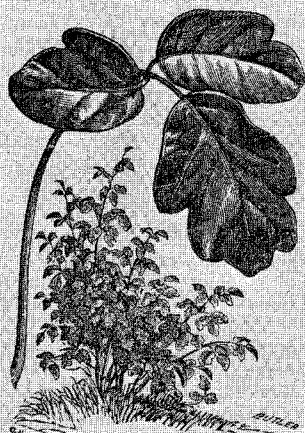
The photograph on page 234 is from the California State Library; on pages 236, 240 and 243, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company; on pages 237 and 246, the Bancroft Library. The photographs on pages 239 and 244 are from the CHS Collections.

Notes

1. "George Henry Roe," *The Builders of A Great City: San Francisco's Representative Men* (San Francisco, 1891), p. 298.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Charles M. Coleman, *PGandE of California* (New York: 1952), p. 51 ff. Coleman's book and research were particularly helpful in the preparation of this article.
4. "Autobiography of Geo. H. Roe" (written about 1890), typed ms. in California Historical Society Library, p. 3.

5. Coleman, *PGandE of California*, p. 10.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
8. James A. Cox, *A Century of Light* (New York, 1979), p. 26.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Lawrence Kinnaird, *History of the Greater San Francisco Bay Region*, 1 (New York and West Palm Beach, 1966): 497-8.
11. Jerome A. Hart, *In Our Second Century* (San Francisco, 1931), p. 49.
12. "Autobiography of George H. Roe," p. 2. See also "George Henry Roe," *Builders of a Great City*, p. 297, and Coleman, *PGandE of California*, p. 54.
13. *History of the Palace Hotel*, undated, Palace Hotel memorabilia collection California Historical Society Library.
14. Excerpt from *Postscript to San Francisco News Letter*, October 30, 1875, California Historical Society Library.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Kinnaird, *History of Greater S. F. Bay Region*, p. 498.
17. *Extracts from the Scientific American and Other Papers* (Boston: Brush Electric Light Co., Nov. 1, 1881).
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Mining and Scientific Press*, December 14, 1878, quoted in Kinnaird, *History of Greater S.F. Bay Region*, pp. 498-99.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 496.
21. "Home Again. Arrival of the Great Captain. The Bewildering Reception of General Grant at San Francisco," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, October 11, 1879. In this reference to "the greatest of modern inventors," the writer may have confused San Francisco's new Brush arc lights with the well publicized lighting experiments of Thomas Edison in the East. Edison's incandescent light bulb was not available in San Francisco until the early 1880s.
22. Coleman, *PGandE of California*, p. 60.
23. "Home Again," *Leslie's Illustrated*, October 11, 1879.
24. "Autobiography of George H. Roe," p. 5.
25. *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*, June 3, 1893, from newspaper clipping collection in Wells Fargo History Room, San Francisco.

Pages from the Past—



THE POISON OAK.

THE POISON OAK.

This subject has elicited more attention, and invited more examination than we supposed it probable, when the first article appeared upon it, in this Magazine. Letters upon letters, of inquiry, and for information have poured in upon us; some telling us of its inconvenient and painful effects with its accompanying symptoms; others relating the particular kinds of treatment, which have been successful to them, individually, with a variety of questions as to what it is? how to avoid it? what is a certain cure for it? etc., etc.

To satisfy these inquiries, in some measure, we renew the subject, giving some illustrations of the shrub, and its

effects, in hopes that, although we do not profess to be physician extraordinary, to this class of persons and cases, we may nevertheless diffuse information of value to those affected by it.

For ourselves we may say that we can handle it, and even eat it, with impunity, as it produces no effect whatever upon us; but we regret to say it is not thus with all.

In the early part of last month, we saw a person almost blind from its effects, and with his entire face, and portions of his body, very much discolored and swollen. In this condition he was recommended the "sweating" process, adopted and practiced by Dr. Bourne, the Water Cure physician of this city. The following statement, from Mr. M. Fisher, will distinctly explain itself.

I was poisoned by contact with Poison Oak, February 23d, 1867, at three o'clock, P. M. At ten o'clock, P. M., 24th, my condition was very distressing as shown by the first portrait, then taken, when I was rapidly becoming blind. The second portrait shows my improved state two and a half to three hours later, after a thorough sweating. The third portrait was taken at forty-eight hours later than the first one, and now I am entirely cured of a very severe affection which was rapidly getting worse, and exhibiting its effects all over my person; without medicine or any other than the mode above stated, only three baths. During the year 1858, the Poison Oak caused me partial blindness nearly one month; and total blindness for several days, with much suffering.

Now we give the above, simply to show



EFFECTS OF THE POISON OAK.

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HUTCHINGS' CALIFORNIA MAGAZINE.

that a good sweating, and the drinking freely of cold water, with the application of cloths, saturated with warm water, to the head and face, can be practiced by any one with the greatest safety and efficiency.

"Any mode (says the *Alta*) of taking a vapor bath will do, either by means of steam admitted to a tight box, or by placing the patient under blankets, and heating the water with hot stones; or other convenient plan, so that it be effectual, and allow the patient's head to be exposed to the air, avoiding the necessity of breathing the hot and vitiated steam.

"From having witnessed its effects, we recommend the foregoing as a simple and efficient process for overcoming this troublesome disorder, to all such as may unfortunately require its aid.

There are some afflicted so severely, as to induce protracted illness, often blindness, and sometimes even death. We have frequently known it to baffle the treatment of physicians for weeks and months, subjecting the patient meantime, to great inconvenience and suffering. We have, therefore, thought it worth while to give the



AFTER A BATH OF THREE HOURS.

public the benefit of a mode of cure, applied in a case that recently came under our own observation; and which seems alike simple, speedy and efficacious."

Some have used gunpowder with effect,—others alcohol,—others strong ley—and who have become cured by rubbing the parts affected, although the "sweating" process seems to us, the most natural.

"I suggest a remedy for the pustular eruption," writes a gentleman from Umpqua City, Oregon, "produced by the poison oak:—take sulphate of iron, ten grains; laudanum, half an ounce; water, one ounce—mix and apply to the diseased surface, constantly, by means of soft linen, saturated with the solution. If the eruption is persistent, with sympathetic fever, take salts in aperient doses, and one grain of sulphate of iron, internally."

Too much care cannot be used when riding or walking near this poisonous shrub, especially by those persons who are most easily affected. It is also very desirable that a remedy should be applied as speedily as possible after its effects are first felt,—thus saving much annoyance and inconvenience.



CURED.

The Poison Oak—Its Cure

A FEW MORE WORDS ABOUT THE POISON OAK—ITS CURE.

Since the publication, in our last number, of an article on the Poison Oak of California, we have been favored with some additional information concerning it, which we now place before our readers. A correspondent, under the *nom de plume* of "Gold Spring," gives the following:

"I was pleased to see, in the October number, a short notice of the Poison Oak, or *La Yedra*, as the Mexicans call it, and I am anxious to obtain information about it, and also to learn a preventive of its evil effects. I believe that I am as subject to its influence as any person can be, and I perceive that I am infinitely more liable to be affected by it now, than when I first commenced to mine, in 1850. At that time, it was necessary that I should come into actual contact with, and even be scratched by it, in order to be attacked severely; but now, if I work within a few paces of it, and perspire, as one is apt to do in a California summer, I am certain, although exceedingly careful not to touch it, to be badly 'poisoned.'

"The effects, however, are not precisely the same, on me, as on many others. Its first appearance is in the form of small red pimples on my arms or legs, and these soon become watery pustules, which speedily spread over all the most tender parts of my body, as inside my elbows and knees; and, in fact, in every place where the skin, by forming a *verruca*, appears to detain the perspiration. Sometimes it breaks out across my stomach, and then it produces a very unpleasant, sickly feeling gradually. The parts, however,

never swell, which I have attributed to the ease with which it appears to break through the skin. These pustules are exceedingly irritating, and, when scratched, which it is almost impossible to avoid doing, become very painful. The eruption, if left to itself, usually continues for about a week, when it gradually subsides—sometimes, however, leaving a memento of its passage in the shape of boils, which break out here and there over the affected parts. I forgot to say that the pustules are sometimes so thick as to produce the appearance of a severe, blistered scald, and the discharge of aqueous matter so great that I have had a pocket handkerchief which I tied round my arm, wet through several folds by it.

"As for its cure, almost every one has a different specific, although the most favored appears to be salt and water. I have tried almost every thing I could hear of—salt, gunpowder, carbonate of soda, sugar of lead, and many others, with various success, but have never been able to cure it under three or four days; and then, when I resumed work, found myself just as subject to it as ever. I have also tried decoctions of various plants, in order to find an *immediate* remedy, but without avail. I am rather opposed to the use of any such violent specifics as those above named, as I think they are very apt to produce internal sickness. I am inclined to the opinion that, where convenient, frequent bathings with water, as hot as can be borne, is about the best treatment. Some light aperient may be taken at the same time. A solution of acetate of lead, with some drops of laudanum in it, is, however, tolerably

effective. I think, however, that it is with this, as with other ailments; that, as it affects differently constituted persons variously, so it is differently cured. I have known some people who have used salt and water with great effect, although it produced none on me. By the way, I have observed that persons of a light complexion are much more easily affected by it than dark ones. Is this also the result of your experience?

"I should be very much pleased if some of your readers would throw a little more light on the subject of curing or preventing the evil effects of *La Yedra*, for I am so annoyed by it when mining as to have christened it 'mine enemy,' believing it to be the only one I have in the country."

Gold Spring's letter is one of the many instances of the good effect of disseminating information of local interest. We quote his favor, and hope that it will be an example to our readers, of communicating any intelligence that may tend to benefit our community. We are glad to see that he recommends caution in the use of external applications, as we are yet unacquainted with the whole of its symptoms.

Some have suggested constant rubbing with ice, or bathing in ice-water; but we would by no means recommend it; applications similar to those in use for other poisons of like appearance are safest.

Since our last, we have submitted its leaf to a powerful microscope, but can discover none of the *fibra hance* of the sting-nettle. We observed that its leaf is much charged with succulence, of less consistency than that of the oak,

to which it bears some resemblance. We have seen a person who declares that he has frequently swallowed some of its juice, after mastication, with impunity, but are inclined to attach little importance to this knowledge, as, from the time of old Homer, who, in the fourth book of his *Iliad*, records of Macaon, the son of Æsculapius—

"Then, when he saw the wound, where the poison'd arrow fell,
Having suck'd out the blood, applied with art
That remedy
The prudent Chiron gave to his beloved father."

and of Eleanor, the wife of the English king, Edward I, who sucked the virus from the wound made by a poisoned arrow, and so saved her husband's life at the hazard of her own, it has been well known that many poisons may be imbibed harmless, which would cause death if externally applied, and *vice versa* of others.

From the effects of this poison, a gentleman with whom we are very well acquainted, was entirely blind for six weeks, his head having swollen to an enormous size; and, in addition to his distressingly painful condition, was much afraid that it would become fatal in its consequences. Many of the usual remedies, superintended by a skilful physician, were useless and unavailing, until a friend, while visiting him, suggested the use of the *soap root*, so common throughout California. This was tried with eminent success; for in three days after its application he was able to resume his business. As nearly every one throughout California is familiar with this root, we need only add that it was used in the same manner as common soap.

"The Church is beginning to crumble"—

A DOMINICAN DOCUMENT FROM BAJA CALIFORNIA IN 1808

Since founded in 1215 by Domingo de Guzmán, the Order of Preachers has diligently sought to make the world its cell and the ocean its cloister. Entering the New World in 1510, the Dominicans, as they are known, settled on Española, a small island in the Caribbean Sea, to begin an unparalleled humanitarian campaign on behalf of the region's native peoples. Pedro de Córdova, Antonio de Montesinos, Bartolomé de Las Casas, and Luis Cáncer are only a few who threw themselves wholeheartedly into the task of advancing the spiritual and material welfare of the Indian population.

In practically every corner of the two American continents penetrated by Spain, the Order of Preachers labored with distinction. As early as 1526, they moved from the Caribbean islands to preach the Gospel within the present borders of the continental United States, possibly with Ponce de León in 1513 and assuredly with Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón in 1526.

While never as influential in New Spain as the Franciscans, the Order of Preachers worked with singular success. Their missionary foundations in Oaxaca, for example, were considered outstanding models of evangelic accomplishment. The Dominicans were also the first group to gain a successful foothold in the Sierra Gorda region where, by the close of the seventeenth

century, they maintained six flourishing missions.

On April 7, 1772, the Dominicans were officially entrusted with all the Jesuit foundations in Peninsular California, as well as the recently-founded frontier establishment of San Fernando de Velicatá. Actual transfer of authority took place in mid-1773, when the last of the Franciscans departed for their new apostolate in Alta or Upper California. A territory of immense proportions, it included what one writer aptly called "the decadent area south of Velicatá and the virgin territory north."¹

The Dominican presence in Baja California lasted for the next eighty years,² during which time the friars established eight new missions. Between 1772 and 1854, fourteen Dominicans occupied the office of *presidente*.³

After 1804, when the peninsula was politically severed from Alta California, the fortunes of missionary work in the area were irrevocably altered. Initially, the region's isolation beneficially insulated it from many of the vexations confronting the mainland, but time eventually caught up with Baja California and placed insurmountable obstacles in the path of the friars.

Very little is known and even less has been published about the ecclesial life of Peninsular California during the nineteenth century. According to Father Zephyrin Engelhardt, "The fault lies with the Dominicans themselves, who either failed to record interesting events and incidents, or allowed the documents to go astray."⁴

Materials unearthed in recent years, however, indicate

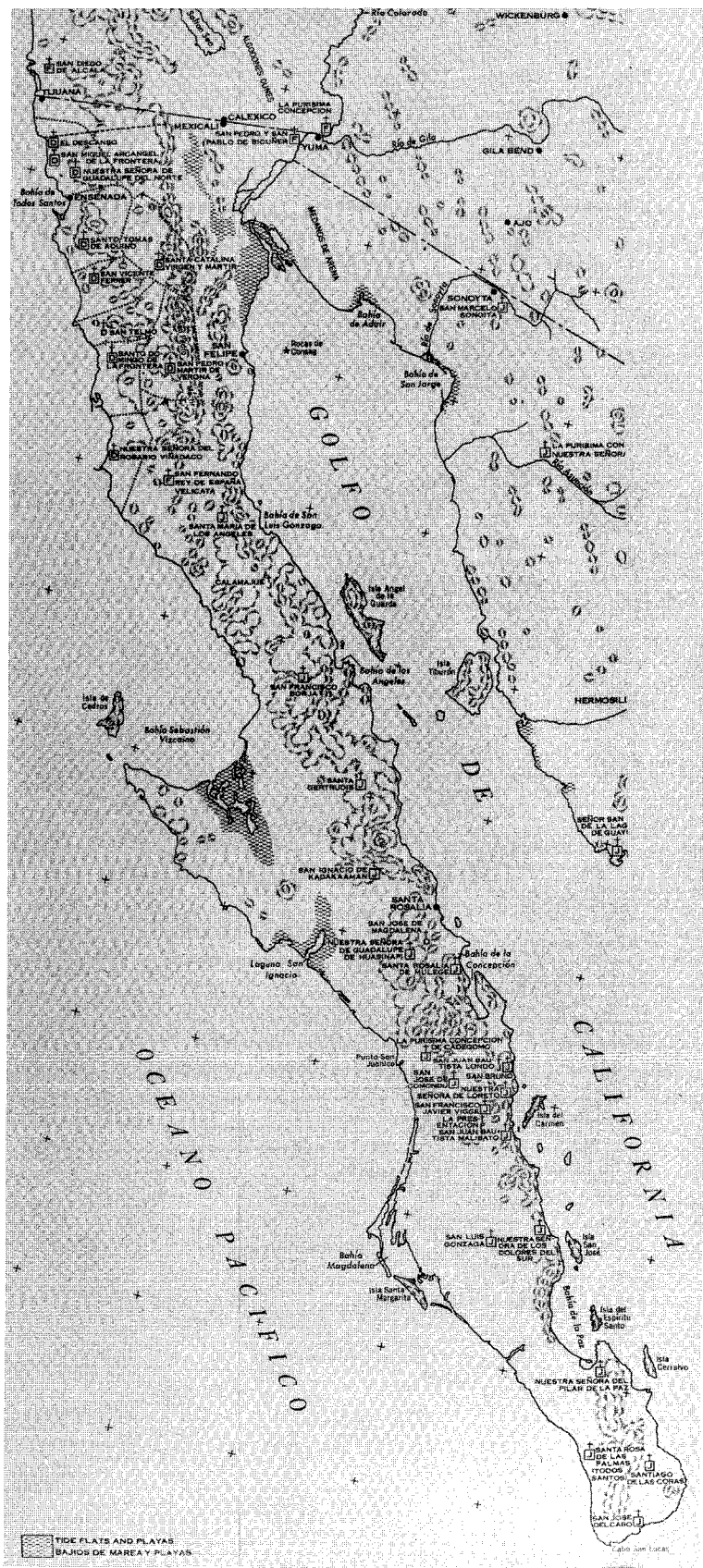
Rev. Francis J. Weber, Archivist of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, is a prolific author and editor of books and articles about Catholicism in the West.

that Father Engelhardt may have been unduly harsh on the Order of Preachers.

Recently emerging from the shadows is an archival treasure which sheds light on this subject. It is a packet of materials dated from 1808 to 1818 which found its way into the collection of Western Americana manuscripts gathered by the late Frederick W. Beinicke for the Yale University Library.⁵ Among the documents is a fascinating and informative plea for financial assistance addressed to the prior and vicar general for the Order of Preachers, Father Alexander Fernández.⁶ In the eleven-page document written at Loreto on December 23, 1808, Father Ramon López,⁷ president for the Dominican Missions in Baja California, provides a rare glimpse into the vicissitudes that plagued the peninsular outposts. It is herein translated and annotated for the first time.

Other correspondence in the packet indicates that the report was sent through the office of the Dominican procurator, Father Juan Rivas, to Fernández, who was residing at the Convento de Santo Domingo in Mexico City. Upon receiving the letter, the vicar general wrote a covering note⁸ endorsing the proposal which he sent, along with the original plea, directly to Viceroy Pedro Garibay.⁹ Unknown is the ultimate disposition of the request from the *presidente*, although it seemingly unleashed a raft of complaints and countercharges that continued for another decade.

While the Dominican missionary efforts in Peninsular California were considerably less productive and surely less dramatic than the padres' exploits in other areas of the New World, scant but emerging records show, as one historian has written, that the self-sacrificing friars "labored as effectually for the Indians, and accomplished as much good for religion, as either the Jesuits or the Franciscans. And these fruitful labors the friars of St. Dominic continued until they were deprived of all means of subsistence, and were forced to leave the country by the destructive secularization measures of the past century."¹⁰



M. R. & Fr. Juan Rivero Vicario delos mision de esta Mis.
Calif.^{ca}

A nro. M. R. & Vicario Genl. Fr. Alexan-
dro Fernandez, prometi en Oficio de 7 de Nov. que si-
nalizo q^{ue} en el Loreto inmediato, havia prometido a mi
S. M. R. por conducto de V. q^{ue} no podia ser q^{ue} el Sr.
Francisco de esta estension de la Mis. Calif.^{ca} se man-
tuviese en este Presidio de Loreto, con tres cientos por
carga q^{ue} se impondria al Sr. Misionero, y no lo ha-
ce porq^{ue} me lo impidieron varias ocupaciones, que
era precisa la atencion de ellas, pero ahora lo
hago aunque con mucho trabajo, hurtando el ti-
empo, a otros que acaban q^{ue} dan alguna espera.

De ninguna manera me parece q^{ue} lo tra-
ia mejor q^{ue} el dependiendo moraria y sencillamente
el Estado de la Iglesia, y lo que es de este Presidio, y el
de otras Misiones, porq^{ue} de la manifestacion verda-
dera de el, se conduira q^{ue} no a posible q^{ue} con
ellos por p. su aun con otros tanto mas pueda re-
novarse el Sr. Yolena y Colono, reemplazarse de lo
q^{ue} previam^{te} necesitaba, y aun minimo tiempo
mantenerse un P. Franc^{isco} y un P. Gen^{eral}, q^{ue} lo
necesaria aquel indispensable p. q^{ue} lo sea su-

December 23, 1808
Loreto

Last November 7, I solemnly promised the Very Reverend
Vicar General, Father Alexander Fernández, that I would
send him by mail, through your kind offices, a plea on behalf
of the Presidente of the Missions in Peninsular California,
who finds it impossible any longer to sustain himself at this
Presidio of Loreto with the 300 pesos he receives as support.
I have hesitated only because of other pressing matters which
demanded my immediate attention. Now, I briefly put aside all
my other obligations long enough to make this presentation.

There is no more effective manner in pleading my cause
than to describe the status of the church and presbytery at this
Presidio, as well as conditions in the other missionary foun-
dations. It will be easy enough to see that it would be im-
practical to expect these buildings to be repaired with another
300 pesos, or even double that amount, as long as it is also
necessary to support the Presidente and his assistant priest
from the same allocation.

The situation here presently is thus: The entire church
building,¹ the nave, chapel of the Holy Rosary, choirloft,

1. Dating from 1793, the church at Loreto was once richly decorated.

sacristy, and tower are all badly worn, dilapidated and beginning to crumble on both the inside and the outside. The doors are in pieces. Only two of the six bells are usable. The altarpieces, five in the church and one in the chapel, are all broken, unglued and falling from their frames. Some of the altar tables are disintegrating too and everyone of them, except for the main altar, lacks such basic adornments for the worthy celebration of the Liturgy as antependia, altarcloths, crucifixes, candlesticks and bookstands. When Holy Mass is occasionally celebrated at any one of these altars, it is necessary to remove these items from the main altar, on which the Blessed Sacrament reposes. And that is surely disrespectful to the Lord. In the sacristy, only the clothespress is usable—probably because there is so little traffic there. Everything in the sacristy is in poor condition.

The rag-like copes can be somewhat repaired, except for their length. There are many chasubles and other vestments which should be burned. While there are enough vestments for offering Holy Mass, most all of them need considerable mending, especially the linens, most of which need replacement. There are two fairly new albs, but unfortunately, the lace on each is badly worn. The other albs are threadbare, but they should last for a while longer. The same is true for the amices, corporals, purificators and finger towels. There are quite a few of these last items, perhaps six complete sets. The altarcloths are virtually useless, as are the antependia. There are a few broken and ravelling cinctures, one of which is still used everyday. There are no hand towels, finger dishes or lecturns, to say nothing of the other instruments for the administration of the sacraments. There are enough sacred vessels, but even they need attention.

The sacristan of the church is retired from the Royal Navy. There are a few altar boys who enjoy participating in the liturgical ceremonies. Holy Mass is offered and certain other services are conducted for those wishing to attend.

The condition of the presbytery² is even more deplorable than the church. It is in a state of physical collapse and, in many places, unroofed. Those of us who live here are constantly in

2. It was a small house, which contained a sala or reception room and another larger room divided into several sections.

danger from falling tiles. Very little is functional, except for the doors, hinges and the like which I have repaired from my own personal funds. The furnishings consist of three or four paintings, two reasonably-good tables, a couple of old bookcases, some few books, a silver dish, one serving spoon and five utensils. There are a few chairs, some wardrobes and one or another small thing of scant value.

The rancho attached to the mission at Comondú, which my predecessor³ acquired, should be of some worth. Formerly, it provided a bit of revenue, but in more recent times it has deteriorated and now needs a considerable investment to restore its productivity. Presently I can make no use of it, though I will hold title to it until an appraisal can be made.

This foundation owes the Royal Warehouse 716 pesos, four reales and a little more and there is a personal indebtedness of six pesos and four reales contracted by my predecessor. I feel these debts should be paid by the missions and in this I concur with my predecessor who considered these as legitimate expenses incurred in executing the office of Presidente. These are some of the manifold problems which I have yet to resolve, with the help of God.

After mentioning the status of the church and presbytery here, let me now address myself to the other foundations. This I will do in cursory fashion, beginning with San Miguel, the northernmost mission and concluding with the outpost of San José del Cabo in the south.

Conditions at San Miguel⁴ are not very good. While outwardly prosperous, its minister can barely provide the Presidente with twenty-five or thirty pesos annually. I know quite well that the priest there can hardly meet his own needs.

The Mission of Santo Tomás⁵ is better off. Yet even though that foundation excels those on the frontier, when I look at the

3. Father Miguel Gallego, the former vicar provincial and Presidente, had served at San Vicente Ferrer (1789-1794), San Francisco de Javier (1794), Nuestra Señora de Loreto (1795), and Santa Rosalia de Mulegé (1795-1798). He became Presidente in 1804. The venerable Dominican died at Loreto from a sudden illness on January 2, 1810.

4. Founded in 1787, Mission San Miguel Arcángel was located in an isolated area about fifty miles south of San Diego.

5. A new church had been completed at San Tomás de Aquino in 1801, along with a shelter for young girls and unmarried women. Its foundation in 1791 completed the projected line of communications between the two Californias.

list of its current expenditures and then anticipate what is needed for the immediate future, I can see that there will be precious little left over. Hence that establishment must be classified with San Miguel.

The Mission of San Vicente⁶ which, until recently, I administered for twelve years, remains much as when I departed. It is about the same as those already mentioned. It is not at all likely that my successor⁷ there will be able to maintain the twenty-five or thirty pesos formerly paid each year to the Presidente.

The mission dedicated to our holy founder, Santo Domingo,⁸ is in even worse condition financially than that of San Vicente. At most it is barely subsisting. Nevertheless, I will ask the minister there to at least try to meet a tax of twenty-five or thirty pesos to the Presidente.

The foundation of Santísimo Rosario⁹ can contribute a little more. Though it has neither good ranches nor many cattle, the friars¹⁰ have carefully managed in the past decade to support themselves and to put something aside.

The Mission of San Fernando¹¹ can give nothing because of a long series of unfortunate occurrences. It is akin to a very old man who lives on a day-to-day basis, until a lack of strength finally curtails his activity altogether.

The two missions in the hills, Santa Catalina¹² and San Pedro¹³ cannot give what they don't have. The minister at Santa Catalina formerly was able to send something, but now he struggles just to make ends meet. San Pedro is good for little more and likely will always be that way. A lot more

could be said about those missions in another context.

The Mission of San Borja¹⁴ is anything but prosperous, but I would think the friar there could contribute a minimal sum to the support of the Presidente.

The same cannot be said for Santa Gertrudis,¹⁵ which manages to exist solely through the kindness of Divine Providence.

The Mission of San Ignacio,¹⁶ although it has seen hard times, now appears to be doing better. It can be grouped among those able to bear some taxation.

Mission La Purísima¹⁷ can likewise be put in that category, since it is among the more stable foundations.

Nothing can realistically be expected from the Missions of Mulegé,¹⁸ Comondú¹⁹ and San Javier,²⁰ all of which are on their last breaths.

As for the southern missions of Todos Santos²¹ and San Jose del Cabo²² and the last one that belongs to the Dominicans,²³ I have only a limited acquaintance. But since they are still operational and are surrounded by mining interests,²⁴ I would assume they could manage some form of taxation for the maintenance of the Presidente.

In this sad state of affairs, which relies entirely on Divine Providence for temporalities, I can only conclude, after a

6. Ideally situated on a large plain with abundant grass, marshes, water, and arable land, San Vicente Ferrer was the only Dominican mission not eventually relocated.

7. Vg. Father José Duro.

8. A severe epidemic in 1801 had killed many of the Indians at Santo Domingo.

9. Nuestra Señora del Santísimo Rosario, established in 1774, was the first Indian missionary outpost of the Dominicans in Baja California. Eventually it became the most stable and prosperous.

10. Father José Caulas was then stationed at the mission.

11. Situated along the thirtieth parallel at the northern limit of the San Borja desert, San Fernando de Velicatá was the only mission founded under Franciscan auspices in Peninsular California.

12. Santa Catalina, begun in 1797, was the last of the Dominican establishments in Baja California and the only one not built in a valley. Father Manuel de Águila was the resident missionary.

13. A new church had been erected at the mile-high Mission of San Pedro Martir de Verona in 1801.

14. Established by the Society of Jesus in 1762, San Francisco de Borja had formerly been the most populous of the missions in Peninsular California.

15. Dating from 1752, the Mission of Santa Gertrudis was situated in an isolated ravine in the heart of a mountain area twenty-six miles from San Ignacio. The church was still in very good condition.

16. The origins of San Ignacio de Kadakaaman can be traced to 1727. It was one of the "mountain missions".

17. Purísima Concepción, founded in 1720, was located along the banks of the Cadegomó River.

18. The church at Santa Rosalia de Mulegé was in fairly good condition, but the rest of the buildings were rapidly disintegrating.

19. A stone church was located west of Loreto at San José de Comondú about midway between the gulf and the Pacific.

20. Father Gerónimo Soldevilla was then stationed at San Francisco de Javier.

21. Perched upon a high and picturesque mountain, Todos Santos also boasted a chapel, Our Lady of the Holy Rosary.

22. San José del Cabo was the first of the peninsular establishments begun in the south. It was located near an inlet anchorage frequented by foreign ships.

23. Presumably the reference is to Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, which was actually an *estancia* or cattle ranch until 1834. Father Rafael Arviña was the resident priest.

24. Such mining towns were San Antonio, once the capital of Baja California, and El Triunfo, at one time the largest city in the southern part of the peninsula.

thorough examination of conscience and a great deal of reflection, that the only feasible way of carrying on the office of Presidente is to have the Royal Treasury pay his salary. He would need 700 pesos annually, over and beyond the 350 pesos he receives as a minister. That amount, added to the 100 pesos he may realize from taxation and what little comes as offerings and stipendia, would enable the Presidente to support himself and his companion and to make the more necessary repairs to the church and presbytery.

This proposal should not be looked upon as unique or strange. The Presidio here numbers upwards of 700 souls between the militia, sailors, royal officials and neighbors. That estimate does not include prisoners or the many visitors that arrive here with ever-greater frequency. There is a real need for a parish church staffed with self-supported priests. Also, I feel that the already poverty-stricken missions should not be expected to bear the total or even predominate expenses of this foundation as its resident ministers.

If the Presidio here were located nearer to a mission, like those in Alta California, possibly other arrangements could be made for its temporalities.²⁵ In that case, maybe one priest would suffice, if there were two in the adjoining mission.

25. The question of providing chaplains for the four presidios in Alta California was a constant source of friction between civil and religious leaders throughout the missionary era.

The Peninsular California Missions in 1808
as described by Father Ramón López

Missionary Foundation	Order	Founded— Abandoned
Nuestra Señora de Loreto	Jesuit	1697-1822
San Miguel Arcángel	Dominican	1787-1834
San Tomás de Aquino	Dominican	1791-1849
San Vicente Ferrer	Dominican	1780-1833
Santo Domingo	Dominican	1775-1839
Nuestra Señora del Rosario	Dominican	1774-1832
San Fernando de Velicató	Franciscan	1769-
Santa Catalina	Dominican	1797-1840
San Pedro Martir de Verona	Dominican	1794-1806
San Francisco de Borja	Jesuit	1762-1818
Santa Gertrudis	Jesuit	1752-1822
San Ignacio de Kadakaaman	Jesuit	1727-1840
Purísima Concepción de Cadegomó	Jesuit	1720-1822
Santa Rosalia de Mulegé	Jesuit	1705-1828
San José de Comondú	Jesuit	1708-1827
San Francisco de Javier	Jesuit	1699-1817
Todos Santos	Jesuit	1724-
San José del Cabo	Jesuit	1730-1840
Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe	Dominican	1834-1840

However, this foundation is eight leagues distant from the nearest mission and therefore unable to exist with a single minister.

I have endeavored here to propose what is needed, along with sufficient evidence to prove its validity. This I do in eager anticipation of your favorable reaction.

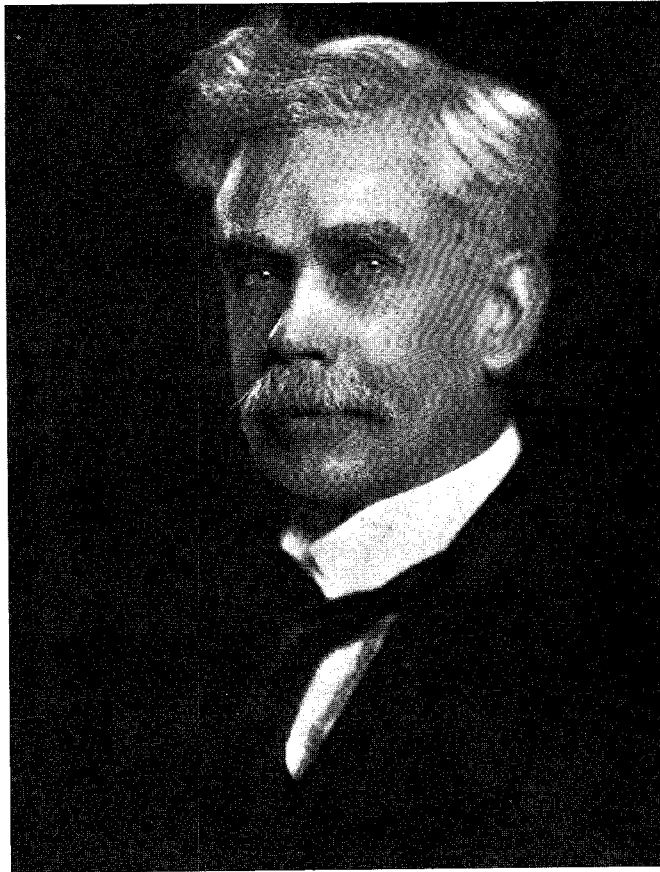
May Our Lord continue to bless you.

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Notes

1. Peveril Meigs, *The Dominican Mission Frontier of Lower California* (Berkeley, 1935), p. 5.
2. For an historical sketch of Dominican activity, see Francis J. Weber, *The Missions and Missionaries of Baja California* (Los Angeles, 1968), pp. 53-65.
3. The men were Vicente Mora (1773-1781), Miguel Hidalgo (1781-1790), Crisóstomo Gomez (1790-1793), Cajetano Pallás (1793-1798), Vicente Belda (1798-1802), Rafael Arviña (1802-1804), Miguel Gallego (1804-1808), Ramón López (1808-1816), Pedro González (1816-1819), Pablo Zúcate (1819-1820), José Sanchez (1820-1822), Pedro González (1822-1825), Félix Caballero (1825-1840), and Gabriel González (1840-1854).
4. Zephyrin Engelhardt, *The Missions and Missionaries of California* (San Francisco, 1929), I: 631.
5. The compiler thanks Dr. Archibald Hanna, curator of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, at Yale University, for permission to reproduce this precious document.
6. This entry is number 130 in Jeanne M. Goddard and Charles Kritzler, eds., *A Catalogue of the Frederick W. & Carrie S. Beinicke Collection of Western Americana* (New Haven, 1965), I: 39-40.
7. Ramón López (c. 1775-1816) was a veteran missionary by the time of his appointment to the presidency in 1808. His longest previous term of service had been at San Vicente Ferrer, where he labored from 1797 to 1808. Father López was known to have visited Mission San Diego during November, 1798, in his quest for souls. He died on June 10, 1816.
8. Alexander Fernández, O.P., to Pedro Garibay, Mexico City, February 27, 1809, *The Frederick W. & Carrie S. Beinicke Collection*, Yale University.
9. Pedro Garibay (1727-1815) was among the more prominent of New Spain's viceroys.
10. Peter K. Guilday, "Notes and Comments," *Catholic Historical Review* III (January, 1918): 495.

Jackson Ralston and the Last Single Tax Campaign



An ardent single-taxer all his life, Ralston and other committee members petitioned Henry George, "editor and proprietor" of The Standard, to call a national meeting of the land-tax reformers.

Not always have Californians provided fertile soil for reform movements, despite Lord Bryce's dictum that the state's inhabitants are "so impatient of the slow approach of the millennium that they are ready to try instant, even if perilous remedies for present evils."¹ To the contrary, Californians have often rejected radical reforms albeit after tantalizing flirtation with new ideas. A case in point is the "single tax" movement. Initiated by Henry George in California with the publication in 1879 of his provocative treatise, *Progress and Poverty*, single taxers sought to readjust economic wealth by curbing land monopoly and speculation through a single tax on land value. Passionately committed to this path to economic equality, a handful of dedicated Georgists kept (and keep) the single tax a live issue in California long after its vigor had waned in the rest of the country. Foremost among these latter-day reformers was Jackson H. Ralston.

Although he never occupied a bench, "Judge" Ralston, as he was known, spent many years as a lawyer in Washington, D.C. In 1924 at the age of sixty-seven, he retired to the town of Palo Alto in his native California. During the national economic depression of the 1930s, the aging warrior led a statewide struggle for adoption of a ballot initiative measure providing for limited land-value taxation. From 1932 to 1938, this "Ralston Amendment" vied for public attention and support with other reform measures of the day, including Upton Sinclair's End Poverty in California (EPIC), the Townsend Plan, and Technocracy.

Ralston's entire career seemed a prelude to this campaign, for he boasted a distinguished record as a fighter for unpopular causes. Born in Sacramento in 1857, Ralston was the son of a lawyer whose unfortunate wanderlust carried him first to the gold fields of California and then to the mines of Nevada.² In 1862 his

James Echols is Assistant Dean in the School of Education and an Associate Professor of History at California State University, Fresno.

mother, the literary-minded daughter of a New York minister, found herself widowed with two children in Austin, Nevada. Accordingly, she betook herself East to give her son the advantages of a genteel if impecunious upbringing in Oyster Bay and Ithaca, New York, and finally Washington, D.C. Although the young Ralston received little formal education, he regarded this circumstance as a blessing that enabled him to preserve his lifelong independence of thought. Apprenticing himself to a printer at the age of fourteen, he worked as a journeyman compositor in the Government Printing Office for five years. Rising rapidly in the International Typographical Union, he had himself, at the age of twenty-one, appointed as a union delegate to the Paris Exposition of 1878.

Meanwhile, Ralston studied law in night school and moved in circles uncommon for a government typesetter. His future wife, Sara Rankin, he met at the home of Supreme Court Associate Justice Samuel Miller. In 1882 the young Ralston joined a law partnership in Washington, where he remained for forty-two years, and gained considerable eminence as a jurist.

The chief business of Ralston's law firm was the searching of land titles. This brought him into contact with what was then known as the "land question." He also met the socioeconomist Henry George. George, whose influential book *Progress and Poverty* was first published in San Francisco in 1879, had abandoned his job as a printer in San Francisco for a worldwide lecture tour to advance his single tax program. Hearing "the sage of San Francisco" address a labor union audience in Washington, the young Ralston afterward sought an interview with him. This meeting, in concert with Ralston's own legal work, confirmed in him the importance of "right use of land." Years later Ralston was to write, "Wealth seemed of little moment alongside even the small contribution I might hope to make toward furthering a great reform."³

Too pragmatic to become a single-tax millennialist,

Ralston was nevertheless profoundly convinced that land monopoly was a great evil. Society would benefit, he believed, to the extent that it inhibited the private accrual of economic gain from socially conferred increases in land values. Acting on his ardent beliefs, Ralston joined other young reformers in the 1890s seeking to implement the single tax. In Hyattsville, Maryland, the town where he lived, Ralston succeeded in having himself and two colleagues elected to the Board of Commissioners. Holding a majority on the board, they proceeded to lift all personal property and land improvement taxes and to raise the tax rate on land from 15 to 25 cents per \$100 valuation. For a year Hyattsville, whose population was evenly divided on the issue, gained national attention by its "single tax" takeover. Then opponents succeeded in having a state court declare the venture "economically unsound," and the town reverted to its conventional tax system. Blocked in Maryland, the same group of single taxers under Ralston's leadership attempted to win a majority of the thirty seats in Delaware's legislature. The disappointing election result turned Ralston away from politics and ended his youthful affiliation with the Republican party.

Not surprisingly, the legal interests of the inquiring young Ralston broadened far beyond the land question. Gaining a measure of prominence as a labor lawyer and champion of civil rights, Ralston became an attorney for the American Federation of Labor as well as a close friend and personal attorney to its founder, Samuel Gompers. For seven years, he defended Gompers against the Buck's Stove and Range Company of St. Louis and finally won dismissal of a sentence for contempt of court.⁴

A longtime champion of the downtrodden, Ralston was first drawn into the field of civil rights in 1894 when remnants of Coxey's Army routed from the nation's capital encamped on the outskirts of Hyattsville. Local authorities persisted in arresting the "soldiers" until Ralston entered pleas for their release, an act which incidentally brought upon him his neighbors' wrath.



Jackson H. Ralston

DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE FOR CONGRESS FROM THE FIFTH MARYLAND DISTRICT

Election: Tuesday, November 7, 1916

**HYATTSVILLE,
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY,
MARYLAND**



As a boy Printer by Trade; Lawyer by Profession.

Took to Hague Peace Court first case tried by it—that of United States vs. Mexico—and won it. Umpire of Italian-Venezuelan Mixed Claims Commission in 1903, passing on millions of dollars in claims against Venezuela.

Author of "Venezuelan Arbitrations of 1903," "International Arbitral Law and Procedure" and other works.

Attorney for American Federation of Labor in Buck's Stove case, acquitting Gompers, Mitchell and Morrison of charges of contempt.

Joint author of Referendum Constitutional Amendment of Maryland, adopted in 1915.

Author of present Federal Employers' Liability Act.

During the Palmer arrests of the 1920s, Ralston again defended victims and participated with Felix Frankfurter and Roscoe Pound in the Popular Government League panel which sought to end the Red Scare and its abuses of civil liberties.⁵

Ralston gained his greatest distinction, however, in the field of international law. In 1897, Senator William M. Stewart of California asked Ralston to pursue the claims by two California Catholic dioceses to a portion of a Jesuit fund which had been in dispute since California parted from Mexico in 1846. Because the Pious Fund, as it was known, had been confiscated by the Mexican government, Ralston urged that the dioceses had a legitimate case against Mexico which should be referred to the newly formed International Court of Arbitration at The Hague in the Netherlands. As a result, the Pious Fund case became the first international dispute to be arbitrated by the international tribunal.⁶

In addition, the Pious Fund case brought Ralston to the attention of the United States Department of State. Promptly nominated a referee in the claims dispute between Italy and Venezuela, Ralston sat as president of the international tribunal when it resolved this case

which was the second submitted to the international court.⁷ Upon his return from Venezuela, he was warmly congratulated by President Theodore Roosevelt for his success. Subsequently, Ralston became an acknowledged authority on international arbitration law and the author of textbooks in the field.⁸

Looking back in 1924 at a full life, Ralston decided to retire from law practice, because his hopes for appointment to a federal judgeship seemed increasingly futile with the Republican party firmly entrenched in power. On the urging of his friend David Starr Jordan, Ralston selected Palo Alto as his place of retirement. Financially secure though far from wealthy, he and his wife lived quietly and comfortably for ten years in the academic atmosphere of the Stanford University community. Even with the advent of the depression, their lives were little affected. In fact they were in Europe on one of their periodic visits when the signal event occurred which ended their tranquil retirement.

This pivotal incident was the hasty adoption in 1933 by the California legislature and electorate of the fiscal reorganization plan known as the Riley-Stewart Amendment. Billed by the conservative James Rolfe

Ralston's 1916 campaign card as the Democratic candidate for congressman from Maryland listed his principles and accomplishments.

administration as an emergency measure necessary to stem the drain on the state treasury, the Riley-Stewart Amendment granted tax relief to hard-pressed property owners and enabled the legislature to shift the burden of state revenue-gathering to sales and income taxes. Hearing about passage of the amendment, Ralston returned home incensed that California's officials had moved to join the growing ranks of states turning to the regressive sales tax. The tax, Ralston believed, would fall most heavily upon the small property holder whom it was supposed to assist, while owners of vast tracts and properties with lucrative site values stood to benefit enormously from the tax. The principles of Henry George seemed never to have been so clearly at work. Believing that the public would find the proposed sales tax repugnant, Ralston resolved to present California voters with an initiative measure which would replace the sales tax with a tax on land values. Traveling to San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, Judge Ralston accordingly called upon old-timers in the single tax organizations to launch an effort to place an initiative measure on the ballot.

Use of the initiative was by no means novel to advocates of the single tax. Since the first initiative election in California in 1912, no reform group except the Prohibition party had made more sustained use of the initiative process. From 1912 to 1922, the California single tax organizations had succeeded in qualifying a ballot measure at every biennial election. Vigorous and well-led, the organizations mustered significant ballot support, but as the years passed and as the affirmative vote dropped steadily from 40 to less than 20 percent, the wording of the ballot proposals had become increasingly radical. Dissension over strategies and the nature of the ballot proposals riddled the single tax organizations, and after

the 1922 election, the Single Tax League of Southern California aborted the coalition, refusing to support any further initiative efforts. Instead, the Southern California group decided to concentrate on educating the public on the issue. The more aggressive San Francisco organization, which under the generalship of the legendary Luke North labeled itself the Great Adventure League, clung to a "now-or-never, all-or-nothing" philosophy but failed to marshal enough petition signatures for another ballot proposal. Ironically, Jackson Ralston, at home in Washington in 1923, declared his sympathies with the moderate single taxers of Southern California. Quietly, the single tax issue disappeared from the political scene in California as it had earlier in the rest of the nation.

A decade later, however, when the California legislature moved in July, 1933, to implement the Riley-Stewart Amendment with a 2½ percent retail sales tax, Judge Ralston had already launched his campaign for the amendment's repeal. Popular opposition to the new tax ran strong, for consumers resented its inconvenience as much as its hardship, while retailers chafed at becoming tax collectors for the state. Accordingly, single taxers generally agreed that the time was right for a new assault which would couple their land-tax reform plan with repeal of the sales tax. By exercising some delicacy, Ralston succeeded in reuniting the single tax groups of Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco behind a ballot proposal which he himself drafted.

Carefully worded and crafted for the widest possible appeal, the Ralston Amendment was a moderate proposal which repealed the sales tax and prohibited similar levies in the future. As well, it provided for an immediate \$1000 property-tax exemption on improvements and personal property and for a gradual elimination of these levies at the rate of 20 percent per year. Nowhere did the proposal mention a land tax. This decision to emphasize the removal and reduction of taxes without acknowledging the necessary collateral increase of taxes on land ultimately proved disastrous, however, for it immedi-

Single taxers were discovering . . . the difficulty of qualifying a proposition with the efforts of volunteer petition circulators alone.

ately exposed the proposition to charges that it provided no alternative sources of revenue, or that it shifted the tax to land holders in a deceptive way.

Undaunted, Ralston plunged into the fracas on the amendment's behalf. Aware that the feeble and superannuated single tax organizations could not sustain an initiative campaign alone, he first sought support where he was already well known—in the ranks of organized labor. At his urging, Paul Scharrenberg, secretary of the California Federation of Labor and an important West Coast labor leader, secured a resolution at the state conference of the labor federation strongly endorsing the Ralston Amendment. Key to labor's action was the proposed repeal of the sales tax, yet the endorsement resolution also contained language unequivocally favoring "the progressive reduction and final extinction of taxation upon improvements and all forms of personal property, including the crops and fruit trees of the farmer."⁹ Although this endorsement was reaffirmed at each annual conference of the Labor Federation until 1937 and although the single taxers held great faith in the coalition, its impact was in fact illusory. Labor leaders never succeeded in marshalling their membership into active political work for the proposition.

Following Ralston's lead in wording the amendment, in the fall of 1933 single taxers organized the "Tax Relief Campaign Committee" to skirt the stigma of the "single tax" label. The committee's task was to qualify the Ralston Amendment for the 1934 general election. To win a position on the ballot, some 110,000 valid petition signatures or 8 percent of the total vote cast at the

last statewide election were needed. By the summer of 1934, three months from the petition deadline, the signature drive was lagging. Single taxers were discovering, as have many other groups in California, the difficulty of qualifying a proposition with the efforts of volunteer petition circulators alone. In addition, organized resistance to the measure was mounted by building and loan associations, the Taxpayers Association, and the Farm Bureau. Even the *San Francisco Chronicle* warned its readers against signing the petitions offering relief from the sales tax because "the whole truth is that they are for the old familiar single tax."¹⁰

In June of 1934, the Los Angeles Tax Relief committee was forced to hire at the rate of two cents per name fifty professional solicitors to gather signatures. On the strength of Ralston's \$750 personal contribution to the efforts in Los Angeles, the organization signed a contract with W. G. Stennett, a professional petition circulator, to secure 18,000 guaranteed valid signatures.¹¹ The committee's move was (and is) standard practice for groups seeking to enter initiative measures on the ballot.

Single tax groups in other parts of the state adopted the tactics of the Los Angeles Committee and secured nearly double the needed number of signatures before the deadline. Yet when county clerks had finished checking the petitions, the majority of the signatures proved to be invalid, and the proposition failed to qualify by 1600 signatures. Keenly disappointed at this setback, the supporters of the proposition were somewhat cheered to be legally allowed to complete the collection of the needed signatures and thereby qualify the proposal for the next general election in 1936.¹²

Would the Ralston Amendment have carried in 1934? Doubtless, the novelty of the labor endorsement and the tide of anti-sales tax sentiment were strongly in its favor. On the other hand, the California electorate demonstrated no general enthusiasm for social experiments in the 1934 election. While joining the national tide approving Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, voters rejected

the labor-supported gubernatorial candidacy of Upton Sinclair and his EPIC program in favor of the conservative Frank Merriam administration.¹³ The single tax proposal, one would suppose, could hardly have fared better than the Sinclair program.

The two-year deferral of the single-tax initiative campaign gave supporters additional time to organize. Soon collecting the 1600 necessary petition signatures, they placed the Ralston Amendment on the 1936 ballot in the strategic position as Proposition 1. But the handful of old-time single taxers who had thrown themselves into the petition campaign in anticipation of a whirlwind victory were sorely pressed to sustain a protracted electoral fight. Most organizers had to return to their jobs, and they left Jackson Ralston with the burden of carrying the issue to the public.

Aging and himself unable to travel extensively, Ralston brought a young single taxer named Noah Alper from St. Louis to become his executive secretary. Opening an office in San Francisco, Alper reorganized the campaign committee, and Ralston replaced Edward Vandeleur, the president of the State Federation of Labor, as chairman of the committee, which was renamed "Sales Tax Relief Association of California." The association nevertheless continued to display prominently in campaign literature the names of Scharrenberg and Vandeleur, the two most prominent labor officials in the state. Lacking funds to promote the cause through advertising, Ralston and Alper kept the campaign alive in the San Francisco Bay area in the next two years mainly by speaking to interested audiences.

Gradually uniting in opposing the Ralston Amendment, however, was a formidable coalition of real estate boards, taxpayers groups, educators who believed that the sales tax was essential to the continued operation of the schools, county boards of supervisors, the State Board

Opposing the Ralston Amendment was a formidable coalition of real estate boards, taxpayer groups, educators, county boards of supervisors, utility companies, and the Farm Bureau.

of Equalization, utility companies, and the Farm Bureau. Over the next years and without exception, the press also grew increasingly hostile. Blistering editorials appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and by 1936 the amendment was labelled by a Southern California newspaper as a "measure with a red tinge."¹⁴

Determined to prevent the Ralston Amendment from reaching the voters, the opposition moved in the summer of 1936 to have it invalidated. Accordingly, two San Francisco attorneys petitioned the state supreme court on behalf of the president of the California Congress of Parents and Teachers to have Proposition 1 removed from the ballot.¹⁵ Alleged in the petition was that the title of Proposition 1 did not properly describe the proposal since it failed to disclose that tax revenues were to be shifted to land values. The court agreed, ruling eight to one in favor of removal from the ballot.

Stunned but experienced in setbacks, Ralston determined that the measure would reach the people even if he and Alper had to carry on the fight alone. Drafting a revised amendment, printing new petitions, and contributing \$15,000 of his own money and another \$5,000 from friends, Ralston again contracted with Stennett, the petition circulator from Southern California, to secure enough signatures to win a place for the measure on the 1938 ballot.¹⁶

Hoping to avoid an expensive election battle in 1938, the opposition set about to prevent the proposal from qualifying. Its agents threatened Stennett's canvassers, offered the canvassers more profitable work, and bought

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WE TAKE PLEASURE IN ANNOUNCING THAT JACKSON H. RALSTON, ESQ., LATE OF WASHINGTON, D. C., WHO HAS RECENTLY ESTABLISHED HIS HOME AT PALO ALTO, WILL HEREAFTER BE ASSOCIATED WITH THIS FIRM IN AN ADVISORY WAY AND WILL PRACTICE AS COUNSEL IN MATTERS INVOLVING QUESTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND PROCEDURE.

MR. RALSTON WAS AMERICAN AGENT IN CHARGE OF THE CASE OF THE PIOUS FUND OF THE CALIFORNIAS BROUGHT AGAINST MEXICO, OPENING THE HAGUE PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION (1902), UMPIRE OF THE ITALIAN-VENEZUELAN MIXED CLAIMS COMMISSION SITTING AT CARACAS (1903), AMERICAN COUNSEL IN THE LANDREAU CASE, UNITED STATES VS. PERU, HEARD IN LONDON WITH VISCOUNT FINLAY AS UMPIRE (1922), AND HAS TAKEN PART IN NUMEROUS OTHER INTERNATIONAL CAUSES. HE WAS THE EDITOR OF "VENEZUELAN ARBITRATIONS OF 1903," AND IS AUTHOR OF "INTERNATIONAL ARBITRAL LAW AND PROCEDURE," "DEMOCRACY'S INTERNATIONAL LAW," ETC.

CUSHING & CUSHING.

SAN FRANCISCO, DECEMBER 15, 1924.

Upon his "retirement" in 1924, Ralston served as an advisor to San Francisco's Cushing & Cushing law firm.

the petitions from the canvassers before they could be turned in to the single tax organization.¹⁷ According to the *San Francisco News*, this petition fight was the most vicious in California's history.¹⁸

Unable to combat these tactics in the cities, Stennett reluctantly moved his efforts to rural counties where canvassing for signatures consumed more time and money. The opposition, nevertheless, pursued him. For instance, after Stennett's chief agent, Pieter Flanton, rented an office on the second floor of the Holland Building in Fresno and placed a notice in the *Bee* newspaper seeking people to circulate petitions, he discovered a man in the lobby of his building who was diverting applicants to another office where they were offered employment on another proposition-qualification drive. Flanton countered by placing a larger advertisement in the *Bee* instructing applicants: "Take elevator to second floor."¹⁹

Despite harassment of this sort in Fresno, Stockton, and Sacramento, enough signatures were collected to qualify the Ralston initiative measure as Proposition 20 in the 1938 election. Again, as in 1936, a shortage of funds for media campaigns forced Ralston, Alper, and a few die-hard companions to seek speaking engagements to plead the reasonableness of their proposal. By Ralston's estimation, the opposition, on the other hand, spent perhaps \$250,000 on billboard and newspaper advertisements that alarmed voters with threats of closed schools, eliminated jobs, and homes lost through enforced tax sales.

Moreover, single taxers were adversely affected by

other measures on the lengthy 1938 ballot. The State Federation of Labor, for example, withdrew its endorsement of the amendment for the first time since 1933, because the unions were embroiled in an intense struggle of their own against the ballot's Proposition 1, a measure to outlaw labor strikes. To avoid alienating voters on that proposition, Edward Vandeleur informed Jackson, the labor federation could not afford to take a stand on any others.²⁰ Another ballot measure known as the "Ham and Eggs" scheme, Proposition 25, stole the preponderance of public attention. Supporters of this relief measure which offered "\$30 every Thursday" to oldsters, were told that the proposed pensions could not be financed without sales tax revenue.

Reaching the electorate in 1938 after a five-year struggle, the Ralston Amendment was soundly defeated almost five to one.²¹ Faithful to the end to Henry George's belief in popular democratic processes, the single taxers' effort to repeal the sales tax collapsed. Not that the amendment's poor electoral showing reflected support for the sales tax; the latter tax remained an unpopular imposition on depression-ridden consumers in 1938. Rather, the amendment's defeat stemmed from the public's uncertainty about the consequences of the shift to taxing land values. Special interests organized to combat the Ralston Amendment succeeded in touching a tender public nerve when they posed the spectral calamities ensuing from experimenting with the country's faltering fiscal structure.

The fate of the Ralston Amendment replicated the

experience of California's other depression remedies even more "instant or perilous," to use Lord Bryce's phrase. Upton Sinclair's socialistic EPIC program, Technocracy, the Townsend Plan, Ham and Eggs, and Utopia, Inc., each made a flamboyant but unsuccessful bid for public acceptance. Lord Bryce's assessment proved correct only insofar as Californians have been prolific in generating plans to hasten the millenium; as an electorate, they have been equally disposed to reject them.

Nor have the processes of direct legislation, on which turn-of-the-century progressive reformers including Henry George set such store, hastened the millenium. As the single taxers learned to their dismay, the initiative process remains especially accessible to well-heeled special interest groups who easily qualify ballot proposals by hiring canvassers. Most grass roots movements, on the other hand, are strained to collect what today amounts to over 300,000 voter signatures in California. Furthermore, should a popular measure reaching the ballot be regarded as inimical to wealthy and powerful interests, it may face the opposition of highly paid advertising and public relations services and captious or hyper-technical legal challenges brought by well paid and skilled lawyers. The initiative process has perhaps not served the cause of reform as well as it has served those who seek merely to bypass the ponderous workings of the legislature.

As for Jackson Ralston, the aging reformer never relinquished the belief that people could be persuaded to accept the tax on land value as an alternative to regressive taxes. After 1938, he continued to urge single taxers to keep the faith that Californians might eventually see their true interests. Characteristically, he offered no regrets about the long and fruitless campaign or its severe financial cost to him. Shortly before his death at the age of eighty-nine, he recalled that the sacrifice had not deprived him of a single cigar and that many people who thought him foolish would have spent the same amount to build another church.²²

All the illustrations in this article are from the Bancroft Library, University of California.

Notes

1. James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth* (New York: 1888), III: 223, quoted in Carey McWilliams, *California: The Great Exception* (New York: 1949), p. 87.
2. Jackson H. Ralston, "Adventures in the Life of a Washington Lawyer" (manuscript in the Ralston Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley), chapter I. Hereafter cited as "Ralston Autobiography."
3. *Ibid.*, chapter I, p. 5.
4. Samuel Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor* (New York: E. P. Dutton Company, 1925), II: 221.
5. "Ralston Autobiography," chapter 9, pp. 1-6.
6. Francis J. Weber, "The Pious Fund of the Californias," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, February, 1963, pp. 91-94.
7. Manley O. Hudson, *The Permanent Court of International Justice* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1934), p. 27.
8. *International Law and Procedure* (1910), *The Law and Procedure of International Tribunals* (1926), and *International Arbitration From Athens to Locarno* (1941).
9. California Federation of Labor, *Proceedings of the State Convention of the California Federation of Labor Held at Monterey, September 14-18, 1933*, p. 45.
10. *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 12, 1934.
11. George Patterson to Jackson Ralston, June 29, 1934, Ralston Papers.
12. Ralston's complete correspondence with single tax leaders is in the Ralston Papers.
13. Governor James Rolfe died in office in 1934. He was succeeded by Lieutenant Governor Frank Merriam of Long Beach.
14. *The Riverside Press*, August 8, 1936.
15. *Clarke v. Jordan*, 7 Cal. (2d) 248; 60 Pac (2d) 457 (1936).
16. Contract between Ralston and W. G. Stennett, October 7, 1937, Ralston Papers.
17. *Land and Freedom*, March, 1938, p. 47; May, 1938, pp. 86-87; July, 1938, p. 110.
18. *San Francisco News*, July 28, 1938.
19. Pieter Flanton to Jackson Ralston, June 14, 1938, Ralston Papers.
20. Edward Vandeleur to Jackson Ralston, October 14, 1938, Ralston Papers.
21. The official vote on Proposition 20 was 1,836,411 to 372,686. Secretary of State, *Statement of the Vote of the State of California at the General Election, 1938*.
22. Ralston to Judge William E. Richardson, May 7, 1945, Ralston Papers.

REVIEWS

Charles Wollenberg, *Reviews Editor*

California History on Film

For the first time in the history of studying history, researchers are no longer limited to reading about what happened. The moving image, on film or videotape, now allows the historian to see and hear what happened.

Moving image material makes more and different kinds of information available for research, as documentaries and home movies record the myriad details of everyday life. The talent of outstanding artists and athletes is preserved. Major events such as wars, revolutions, natural disasters, and political speeches are now recorded visually.

Of course, a change in the form of primary source material does not cancel the need to evaluate those sources. The researcher must investigate the bias behind the creation of moving image material and speculate about what went on outside the frame. Significant events and people may not have been considered worthy of visual recording by contemporaries—or important material may not have survived.

If moving image material is of historical value, another set of questions requires attention. What will be saved? Who will save it? How long will the material last?

While footage of national interest is being archived, mainly in New York and Washington, D.C., in-depth materials on local and regional history will survive only if local organizations take an interest in their preservation. The following survey, which is limited to Northern California collections, attempts to explore what visual materials about California are being preserved and in what way. The institutions surveyed have similar policies and face similar problems. The images are almost entirely on film. Videotape seems to be too new for institutions to think of collecting. Even the collecting of film is usually an afterthought, for films are usually received as part of manuscript collections. Although younger or-

Linda Artel coordinates film reference and research services at the University Art Museum's Pacific Film Archive, University of California, Berkeley.

ganizations value film in itself, they rarely solicit material actively, because they lack the staff time or acquisition funds to do so.

In these post-Proposition 13 times, funding, of course, is a major problem, but funding seems to have always been a problem. Older print-oriented institutions are not themselves convinced that collecting moving images is a high—hence adequately funded—priority. Media-oriented collections tend to become part of larger institutions that are also unconvinced such materials carry high priority.

Despite these difficulties, a variety of interesting material is being preserved, with the future pointing to an increase in preservation efforts. Consciousness about the importance of the moving image is increasing with society's greater reliance on visual media. The form itself has existed long enough to develop its own history and, more concretely, piles of footage that demand attention.

SACRAMENTO MUSEUM AND HISTORY DEPARTMENT, SACRAMENTO

The largest, newest, and most valuable collection in Northern California (perhaps on the West Coast) is the news film library at the Sacramento Museum and History Department. Six months ago, KCRA-TV, Sacramento's NBC affiliate, donated 3½ million feet of 16mm film to the museum.

Since the television industry routinely throws away outtakes (footage that is not edited into a finished film or video work) and usually saves aired footage no more than three years (a legal requirement), quantities of this footage are rare. In this case, the station's first cameraman and present head-camerman, Harry Sweet, had the foresight and tenacity to save footage produced at the station since its inception in 1955. Over the years Sweet saved and daily indexed the footage, until lack of storage space prompted an order to get rid of the material. Sweet would then take the film home, wait until the storage

problem was forgotten, and start returning the footage a bit at a time.

Sweet did more than save the station's own footage. He felt that film pre-dating the station's productions would also be useful in compiling future documentaries and specials. To obtain pre-1955 footage, he systematically purchased a movie newsreel series, *World's Greatest Headlines*, that dates back to 1910.

Quantity is not the only measure of the Sacramento collection's worth. Rated "Class A" by its network, KCRA has often supplied NBC with news teams to cover national issues occurring in California (i.e. Robert Kennedy's campaign and assassination) and elsewhere (i.e. the Viet Nam War, Johnson's tour of Latin America).

The station also maintains the largest bureau covering state government, as well as active bureaus in San Francisco and Los Angeles. At least 500,000 feet of the collection are outtakes, meaning the footage available on a given event is much longer than the short clips that actually appeared on the air.

Several other features greatly enhance the collection's value. All the footage is on safety film, whereas other news archive collections are on videotape, a material experts fear will disintegrate much more quickly than film. The collection will be updated continually. Each year KCRA will deposit footage that is three years old.

Minimal legal restrictions on use of the footage make this collection one of the most accessible in the country. Use of collections is typically severely limited by copyright restrictions, but KCRA has generously placed no restrictions other than one requiring a credit line on footage shown commercially in the station's viewing area. The museum will set up commercial and non-commercial copying rates to generate needed maintenance funds.

Credit for ensuring the preservation of this collection is also due James Henley, the museum's executive director. He has supervised the creation of a model storage system, is working to fund the staff needed for the

Downtown Oakland was the setting of a movie sponsored by a city newspaper in the 1920s.

collection, and hopes to add another film collection to the museum.

Present cataloguing and staff limitations will hamper use of the collection while a two-year computer indexing system is compiled. The staff is most responsive to well-researched inquiries, i.e. specifically dated requests, since the daily station index is the current access tool. Requests that require extensive staff time cannot be filled. The museum director may be contacted at 916-447-2958.

THE BANCROFT LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Film footage is sometimes part of the manuscript collections preserved at the University of California's Bancroft Library, an archive for the history of California and the West. Vivian Fisher, head of the library's microform division, describes three major concentrations of film. About ten reels chronicle activities of the Class of 1912, another five reels show the Class of 1919. A dozen reels of government-produced material from the World War II Japanese Relocation Authority show the building and operation of internment centers located in remote areas of the western United States. The largest group of films, seventy-five reels, is from the Sierra Club and dates back to the 1920s. Part of the footage is from films produced by the organization, including some outtakes not edited into the finished films. The remainder, films made by Sierra Club members on backpacking and climbing trips, constitutes a valuable visual record of back country in the West during the last fifty years.

Other footage at the Bancroft covers a variety of topics that are listed on cards in the library's information file. Films are indexed by name and subject, though the accuracy of subject indexing depends on how much information was received from the film's donor. The library has been able to preserve unstable nitrate footage by transferring it to safety film, however some original safety footage is in dry, brittle condition. (Nitrate, a



standard film stock base until 1951, is highly flammable and capable of spontaneous combustion.)

The Bancroft Library has no viewing facilities but allows researchers to view materials across campus at the University Art Museum's Pacific Film Archive. Permission to copy footage must be obtained from donors. The librarian can be reached at 415-642-3781.

UAM/PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

The Pacific Film Archive, part of the University Art Museum at the University of California, Berkeley, houses a collection of 5,000 titles, including permanent and long-term deposits. California historical footage forms only a small part of this collection which encompasses an international selection of film as art. Major holdings include Japanese, early Russian, animated, avant-garde, and Nazi propaganda films.

Historical material includes tinted footage of the 1915 Pan Pacific Exposition, a few hundred feet of the Sutro

Baths in the 1890s, pre-earthquake footage of Market Street (circa 1903), and a Standard Oil-sponsored film on San Francisco made in the 1950s. A smattering of films about the campus includes John F. Kennedy's 1963 Charter Day speech.

Budgetary restrictions severely limit access to other materials. Several hundred reels of historical footage on nitrate stock are stored at the University of California, Los Angeles, Film Archive vaults in downtown Los Angeles since the university has no special storage vaults in the Bay Area. The 1960s news footage donated by a local television station also remains uncatalogued because the material is on 2" videotape which can only be viewed on costly broadcast-quality equipment not owned by the archive.

To aid researchers, the archive provides facilities for viewing footage from its own collection or footage obtained from other sources. Facilities for watching 16mm or 35mm footage on a screen or on researcher-operated flatbed viewers are available. A small viewing fee is charged.

Unique in Northern California is the archive's public information service, which fields inquiries on any aspect of film study or use. This service can provide a list of California historical films available for purchase and make referrals to possible archival sources of film materials in the United States.

For screening appointments or information queries, call 415-642-1437.

OAKLAND MUSEUM HISTORY DEPARTMENT, OAKLAND

Although the Oakland Museum only recently began collecting moving image material, it has articulated a clear and thoughtful policy about the importance of preserving media as an historic record. This policy also considers media itself as part of contemporary history.

Collecting media materials that relate to California

history is the first step, but the goals of the museum's history department extend to using these materials for research and exhibition. The Bruener Gallery is designed to reflect twentieth-century media and its influence on the people of California. According to Curator of History L. Thomas Frye, this gallery is "a hall where three dimensional objects and graphics, video film and a computer terminal interpret our recent past and ask questions about our future."

The museum's small film collection includes a 1913 Moose Parade in downtown Oakland, the launching of a merchant ship at the Oakland port in the 1920s, and an hour of color film on the making of liberty ships at Kaiser's World War II shipyards in Richmond.

Assistant Curator of History Brooks Johnson has solved the problem of wear on original film prints by copying many films onto videotape. These copies are available for viewing at the museum. Viewing access to other prints is limited. For information, contact the assistant curator at 415-273-3842.

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, SAN FRANCISCO

In twenty-five years of accepting footage that was made available to them, this museum has gathered a small but valuable specialized collection of seventeen films on westcoast shipping. Presently covering the period from 1900 to the 1940s, the collection includes a 1916 film titled *Hunting the Sperm Whale*, a Pathe Newsreel on sailboard racing in San Francisco Bay (donated by actor Sterling Hayden), a film on cod fishing in Richardson Bay, and a Del Monte-sponsored film on fishing in Alaska. The museum also has footage on its own boats, such as the *Balclutha*. About half the footage was filmed by maritime personnel, with the other half produced by film professionals.

A year ago the museum was able to copy its nitrate footage onto safety film. To facilitate research access,

Before the earthquake, San Francisco's Market Street was filmed by a cameraman riding a cable car to the Ferry Building.

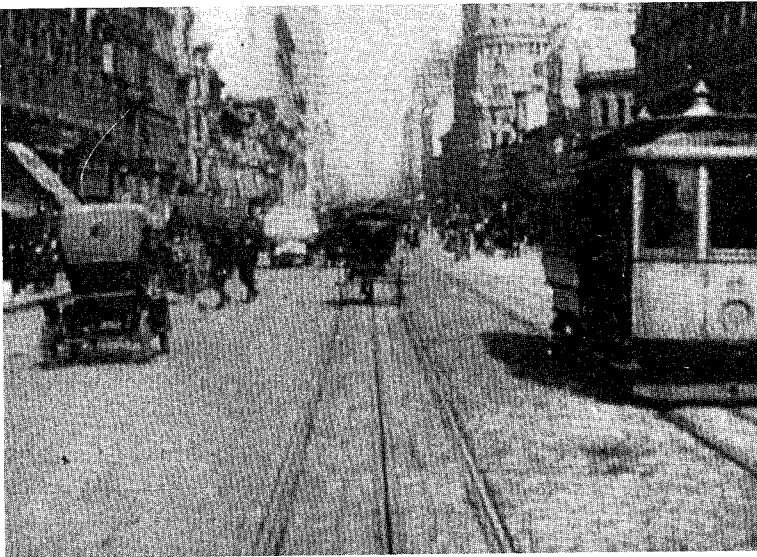


photo archivist John Maounis is compiling the collection's first complete catalogue. The museum maintains no regular viewing facilities but permits researchers to view its footage at other institutions. Laboratory costs and a small handling fee are charged for copies. The archivist can be reached at 415-556-8177.

HOOVER INSTITUTION, STANFORD UNIVERSITY, STANFORD

Because the Hoover Institution at Stanford University collects material on twentieth-century social, political and economic change, their moving image collection is not limited to California history. Three-hundred reels of Nazi-produced newsreels constitute their biggest collection on film. Film and videotape of Ronald Reagan's election campaigns and governorship make up a sizeable media collection focusing on recent California political history.

Beyond actual footage, Hoover offers several media research services which could serve as a model in the field. West-coast access to the Vanderbilt Television

News Archives is one valuable service. Vanderbilt, located in Tennessee, collects the evening news broadcasts of the three major networks. For a moderate copying fee, the Hoover Institution will order a $\frac{3}{4}$ " video-cassette copy of any Vanderbilt material. Researchers make their selections by using the Hoover copy of the news archive's indexes. Footage has been collected for ten years and is currently indexed until 1975. This ability to view footage housed thousands of miles away illustrates the way in which the electronic moving image can be used as an active aid in the study of history, not just as passive recording material.

Although a copying policy may seem unimportant, the Hoover Institution's policy offers another valuable aid to researchers by allowing them to make copies before obtaining copyright clearance. Usually the opposite policy is enforced, making it difficult, if not impossible, for a researcher to get a viewing copy for individual use. The Hoover policy treats a private viewing copy as analogous in principle to a xerox copy. (Broadcast or otherwise publicly-used footage must have a copyright clearance.) A \$10 service fee plus laboratory costs is charged for copies.

For further information, contact Deputy Archivist Charles Palm at 415-497-3563.

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, SAN FRANCISCO

The historical society has about fifteen reels of film that include fascinating pieces of footage such as film on downtown San Francisco circa 1933, the 1938 flood in Los Angeles' Arroyo Seco, and the Berkeley boat harbor in 1938. The society has received this footage as part of larger manuscript and photo collections.

The stills are reproduced by Professor Bertrand Augst from footage at the Pacific Film Archive.

Book Reviews

San Francisco: The Story of a City.

By John B. McGloin, S. J. (San Rafael: Presidio Press, 1979. 443 pp. \$16.95.)

Reviewed by Gladys Hanson, San Francisco City Archivist and author of the San Francisco Almanac.

Too many careless histories of San Francisco are written by authors so sure of their readers' interest in the sensational that they neglect almost everything else. *San Francisco: The Story of a City* is a notable exception, for John B. McGloin, S.J., tells this story with great integrity. Nevertheless his very definite views concerning Eugene Schmitz's administration as our twenty-sixth mayor are certain to arouse wholesome discussion.

Few writers, I am sure, would have attempted the scope he covers in this volume which examines the period from the rise of San Francisco as a Spanish settlement to its life as a modern metropolis. A subject as broad as the history of San Francisco and its people is extremely difficult to encompass in a single volume. Father McGloin has dealt with this problem by arranging his book into sections which include: Beginnings Through the Nineteenth Century; San Francisco Landmarks; People, Labor and Politics; and More Modern Times.

Knowing the importance of a good subject index, the author has provided one with 636 entries. In addition, a section called "Sources & Notes" contributes excellent bibliographic references for those interested in further study.

San Francisco's newest chronicle is a memory trip for me. It brings to mind a classroom in 1965 when Father McGloin, full of zest and enthusiasm and clothed in a long black cassock, faced another group of University of San Francisco students to begin a year-long recitation on a city that should never be called "Frisco".

For this special course, Father McGloin prepared a syllabus of 101 pages as our text. In his introductory lecture, he stressed that he wished to present "scientifically accurate information" and that "some legends would fall and some hitherto overstressed personalities would lose some of their glamour."

Several years later, a much larger student text numbering 554 pages was made available, and it is on this material that John McGloin's latest production is based.

No United States city has such an aura of romance, adven-

ture, color, and glamour as San Francisco, and this new book is most useful, as well as enjoyable, in helping to provide a clearer perspective of its history. Recording the annals of our city is a vast and complicated project. It may be likened to peering into a kaleidoscope which changes at each turn, many turns, of the glass. *San Francisco: The Story of a City* is an overview of a favorite city and a "must own" for collectors of San Francisciana.

The Road to California: The Search for a Southern Overland Route, 1540-1848.

By Harlan Hague. (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1978. American Trails Series XI. 325 pp. \$20.50.)

Reviewed by Donald R. Culton, Associate Professor of History and Evening and Outreach Coordinator, Los Angeles Harbor College.

Of never ending interest to the student and scholar of the American West is the varied, colorful, often tragic, and sometimes tedious story of trailblazing. Based on a wide reading of published journals, articles and books, *The Road to California* is a condensation of the record of 300 years of painfully slow progress in linking Southern California by land to points east and south.

Early in the book, Hague makes the point well that the white man opened few trails in the Southwest. Paths had been traveled for thousands of years by people who would guide the earliest Spaniards through the region. The tale of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca is a prime example of white man following Indian. This story and those of Marcos de Niza and Estevanico, Coronado, Espejo, and Oñate remain as fascinating today as when Bancroft and Bolton produced their classic studies.

The adventures of Father Eusebio Francisco Kino are retold, with the author owing a heavy debt to Bolton. The Jesuit missionary became the foremost champion of the frontier of New Spain shortly after his arrival in America in 1678. Kino made impressive contributions exploring, mapping, and preaching the benefits of the region for Spain and the Catholic Church. His story, however, becomes typical of others when much of what he accomplished was promptly forgotten upon his death.

City life and architecture in Los Angeles, one of the urban West's cities with populations over 8000 in 1880, strongly reflected their eastern counterparts. The towers of city hall (center) and the courthouse rise above the Broadway street scene.

Both Franciscan Tomas Hermenegildo Garcés and his fellow explorer, Captain Juan Bautista de Anza, experienced this same mixture of success and failure. Although Anza, and Garcés left their marks, their legacies may be best remembered because of an opportunity that was missed. Time and again Spanish authorities, through lack of imagination or commitment, were unable to establish amicable and lasting relations with seemingly cooperative Indians.

If the Spanish and Mexicans had been more successful as colonizers in the area, it would not have been as common for American fur trappers to think that they were the first whites to see that part of the world. Much of the earlier record had been forgotten or stored in dusty archives, however, waiting for rediscovery in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Taking advantage of the distractions caused by Mexican independence, the trappers investigated the streams and rivers of much of the Southwest. In the process they added their share to improving the land connection to California. The names are familiar to readers of western Americana: Jedediah Smith, Ewing Young, James Ohio Pattie, and Kit Carson, for example.

During the 1820s and 1830s, the Old Spanish Trail took form. Reaching to the northwest from Santa Fe into present-day Utah, this route dropped down into Southern California after touching the Virgin River and crossing the Mojave Desert. This path became the principal means of reaching California by land until the Mexican War brought Stephen Watts Kearney and Philip St. George Cooke into the picture. Kearney, at the head of his Army of the West, opened a route that Cooke would improve. As leader of the Mormon Battalion, Cooke managed to bring the first wagons into California, by way of the Gila River and across the Colorado Desert. The military had set the stage for the next chapter in the story, the rush for gold beginning in 1848. As the book ends, one is left with the feeling that man had conquered the arid southwest, but incompletely.

All of this story has been told before. However, it has been put together in a fashion which provides interesting reading for the new student and for those wishing to visit old friends. Too much of the action is found in the numerous and lengthy footnotes. Another, albeit mild, criticism is that the three maps inadequately assist in organizing and orienting the reader's imagination. In spite of its limitations, this work, Volume XI in the American Trails Series of the Arthur H. Clark Company, is a worthy addition to the history of the American West.



The Urban West at the End of the Frontier.

By Lawrence H. Larson. (Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1978. xiii, 173 pp. \$12.50.)

Reviewed by Robert E. Levinson, Professor of History at San Jose State University, San Jose, California, and author of The Jews in the California Gold Rush (1978).

What constituted "The Urban West" in 1880? According to the author, such a description belonged to twenty-four towns with populations of 8,000 or more in nine western states and territories. But what sort of towns were they? What went on in them? Was the "city life" of these areas distinctively "western," or was it a composite of urban development forms witnessed in the more settled East?

According to Lawrence H. Larsen, it was most definitely the latter. As he points out, "The major frontier towns owed much more to their eastern counterparts than to the challenge of the western environment" (p. 2). Furthermore,

"Westerners sought to build cities that looked as much as possible like those in the older sections" (p. 48).

This short, attractive book is sure to settle several arguments concerning urban growth in the nineteenth-century West. The author has assembled an enormous and impressive collection of data to indicate that western city builders were not innovators. To the contrary, they were efficient copiers of well-developed systems that seemed to work adequately for all facets of city life in the older, more settled sections of the United States, to the exclusion of native forms already present on the frontier.

Whether in the establishment of street paving or municipal parks, "there was no new society. The western towns borrowed basic concepts from the East, whether or not they suited the environment" (p. 60). In health, fire and police protection, "The extent to which they succeeded or failed depended on existing norms and not upon new methods that originated in the West" (p. 91).

In other words, you could take the people out of the eastern cities, but you could not take the eastern cities out of the people. Much of what they originated was not novel; it was simply an extension of what they had tested elsewhere. The only problem seemed to be the physical act of settling, and the author deals with this subject very well in his chapter on technology that discusses the improvements in transportation systems after the Civil War.

This book is a useful summary of a subject that should have concerned urban historians and western historians long ago. Larsen may now have written all that needs to be said on this subject.

Biography of a Progressive: Franklin K. Lane, 1864-1921.

By Keith W. Olson. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1979. 233 pp. \$17.95.)

Reviewed by Richard J. Orsi, Professor of History at California State University, Hayward, who specializes in California & western history.

Based upon extensive research in manuscript collections, this book is an informative political biography of Franklin K. Lane, a second-echelon progressive leader at the state and

national levels. Olson traces Lane's career from his involvement in early municipal reform movements in San Francisco in the 1880s and 1890s, including the city charter revision of 1898, through his largely unsuccessful fling at California Democratic party politics, to his service on the Interstate Commerce Commission during an important formative period from 1906 to 1913. According to Olson, however, Lane's principal contribution was made between 1913 and 1920, when as secretary of the interior, he served as midwife to several important new natural resource policies, including Alaskan development, expanded federal reclamation, water-power development and regulation, and the leasing system for minerals on federal lands.

Unfortunately, the book is unevenly balanced. While the treatment of Lane's California career is sketchy, with few references to recent works in the state's political history, the Washington years unfold in meticulous, often tedious detail. An entire chapter of this slim volume, for example, consists of a repetitious review of Lane's unerring appointment of subordinates in the Interior Department and his fastidious office management, including his often futile battles with bureaucrats to reduce work backlogs, speed-up paperwork processing, and improve the readability of department correspondence. Later, the author spends four pages refuting the common charge that Lane was the major source of news leaks in the Wilson administration and one page chronicling Lane's successful repulsion of a raid by the Departments of War and Navy on the office space in the new Interior building.

The major flaw in this book, however, is the author's failure at important junctures to be sufficiently critical of Lane individually and the progressive movement generally. Olson essentially employs the "neo-progressive" interpretive framework. Progressivism is portrayed as an anti-monopoly, anti-graft movement, and the progressives, especially Lane, are usually characterized as efficient, wise, non-partisan, and above all, honest, democratic, and public-spirited. In contrast, the progressives' opponents represent the anti-democratic forces of bossism, corruption, special interest, and corporate monopoly. This somewhat Manichean framework leads the author to miss much of the deeper structural context, as well as the contradictions, of progressive politics. For example, San Francisco's city charter movement, in which Lane figured prominently, emerges as a simple contest between honest, efficient government and graft. On the contrary, other recent historians have demonstrated that the city's politics in this era, particularly the charter revision question,

The highly ornate and many-roomed main building of Napa's insane asylum housed some of the state's "disordered in mind" in the mid-1880s.

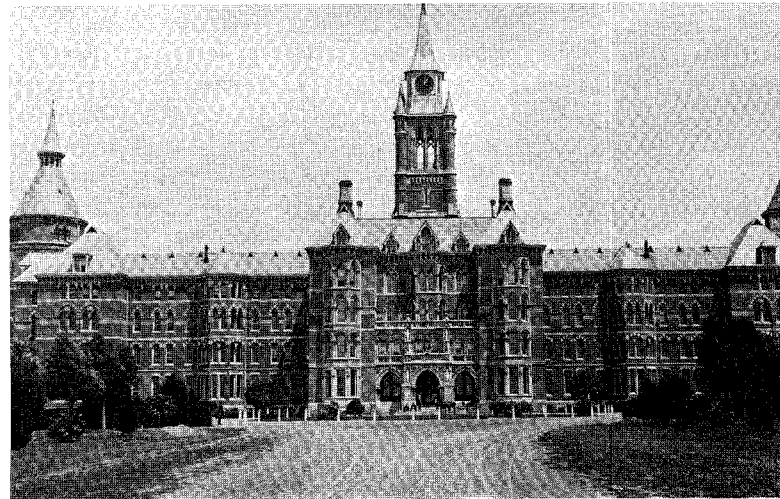
more fundamentally pitted class and ethnic interests against one another in a struggle for power in the city. Olson's treatment of Lane's tenure in the Interior Department reveals similar problems. Lane's vigorous prosecution of Indian land allotment and other programs, which even Lane himself admitted were designed to "dig up and overturn" Indian tradition, are defended by Olson as examples of Lane's "enduring concern for resource development, in this case human resources." Moreover, Olson emphasizes that Lane's management sharply reduced the corruption in the scandal-plagued Bureau of Indian Affairs. Presumably, if Lane's bureau was destroying Indian culture and social organization and speeding up the process of land loss and impoverishment, it was at least doing so more efficiently and honestly than ever before! Also, by treating conservationism as largely an anti-monopoly movement, Olson, as Lane did before him, neglects to investigate other issues, such as the conflict between utilitarian and preservationist approaches to the natural environment, which the progressives left unresolved. In short, although the book is well written and provides much information on the personal career of an important political figure, it does not, despite an historiographical introduction, shed much light on the broader progressive movement, especially in California.

So Far Disordered in Mind: Insanity in California, 1870-1930.

By Richard W. Fox. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978. xvi + 204 pp. \$10.00.)

Reviewed by Irving H. Hendrick, Professor and Associate Dean of the School of Education, University of California, Riverside, who teaches and writes on the history of education in California and the United States.

Richard W. Fox's *So Far Disordered in Mind* is a serious and scholarly history of California's treatment of insane persons during the sixty years before 1930. The first phase of the title captures the essence of the legal criteria used for commitment during most of that period. Central to Fox's work is the review and analysis of 1,229 court cases involving persons determined to be insane by the San Francisco Superior Court between 1906 and 1929.



The book succeeds in informing the reader about changes in practice over time, but its principal contribution lies in interpreting and explaining why Californians felt particularly inclined to institutionalize the insane. And inclined they were. Between the 1870s and 1920s, California had the highest rate of commitments of the insane in the nation. Most were initiated by relatives for the purpose of removing troublesome persons from the family's responsibility. Often the commitments were based on an incomplete diagnosis with such errors as were made most frequently falling on the side of committing. While the insane came from all walks of life, the blue-collar portion of the population, along with the unmarried and the widowed, were heavily overrepresented. The foreign-born, on the other hand, did not appear to be overrepresented. Although the insane included persons described by Fox as a "motley assortment of deviants" (p. 136), many were not necessarily mentally ill. His analysis of the San Francisco commitment records reveals what he sees as firm evidence that the convenience function was paramount in California during the first third of this century. Unwanted persons could be most easily and cheaply confined by finding them insane. Many of the behavioral characteristics most commonly cited as reasons for commitment had little to do with severe mental disability. Between 1906 and 1929 the three most commonly reported behaviors indicating insanity were excessive consumption of alcohol, fear of bodily harm, and masturbation.

Apart from the often capricious manner in which persons

were determined to be insane was the nature of their institutionalization. As late as 1920, twenty-nine of California's fifty-eight counties still confined the insane in jail cells with criminals. Even San Francisco's separate detention hospital was little more than a special purpose jail, complete with locked cells. By the early twentieth century, deviants of diverse physiological and psychological maladies came to be seen as having a single characteristic—that of being “defective” (p. 184). Deviants became distinguished from non-deviants not so much by their mental condition, but by their inability to function effectively as members of the community.

Although the conceptual differences between normal and insane persons appeared to be narrowing in the era, the result was not less frequent institutionalization of the insane. Rather, the latter became viewed as a group of deviants who could benefit from sophisticated treatment available in urban psychopathic hospitals. The availability of these more humane, better equipped, and more appropriately staffed facilities made it even easier for family members to commit their deviant relatives.

While Fox's book is not the most comprehensive in the field, it makes a valuable and original contribution to the history of psychiatry and mental health in the United States. Most impressively, Fox's interpretations are based on a solid base of data.

A Scotch Paisano in Old Los Angeles: Hugo Reid's Life in California, 1832-1852. Derived from His Correspondence.

By Susanna Bryant Dakin. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1939. Reprint paperback, 1979. 329 pp. \$3.95.)

Reviewed by John W. Caughey, Emeritus Professor of History, University of California, Los Angeles.

Susanna Bryant Dakin's *Scotch Paisano* of forty summers ago presents Hugo Reid in the ambience of the idyllic pastoral days before the Gold Rush and not entirely vanquished by the Gold Rush. Cleland, Dana, Bancroft, and other serious writers attest to the attractions. The learned Lindley Bynum stoutly maintained that he would rather have been a Californian then.

Vivid social description is one of the strong points of this biography. Aided by a substantial Stearns-Reid correspondence, the author brings her subject very much alive. Reid was an engaging person, trader as well as ranchero, repeatedly a civic leader, and on top of that a writer.

As added dividend, a documentary chapter goes through all the steps Reid had to take to get himself certified as a Catholic and a Mexican so that he could marry Victoria Comicrabit, a neophyte of Mission San Gabriel. The chapter descants on the wedding and the celebration as legend reports.

For good measure the book includes two appendixes. A fourteen-page tabulation lists the Britons and Americans who took up residence in California before 1840, that is, before the pioneer settlers, so called, began to pour in by the overland trails. Then Reid's letters on his wife's people, the Indians of Los Angeles County, are printed. They first appeared in the *Los Angeles Star* in 1851. Along with the B. D. Wilson report of the next year, in which Reid had a hand, these letters are prime informants on the original inhabitants of the Los Angeles Basin. Long out of print, Dakin's warm biography is good reading and worth studying.

The photographs are from the California Historical Society Collections.

California Check List

By Gary Kurutz, *Library Director*

The California Check List provides notice of publication of books, pamphlets, and monographs pertaining to the history of California. Readers knowing of recent (1978-79) publications which need additional publicity are requested to send the following bibliographical information to the compiler of this list: Author, title, location and name of publisher, date of publication, number of pages, price, and address where item can be purchased if not carried at general bookstores.

Andrews, Ralph W. *Heroes of the Western Woods*. Seattle: Superior Publishing Co., 1979. 194 pp. Publisher, Box 1710, Seattle, Wa. 98111. \$8.95 (cloth), \$6.95 (paper). The Bancroft Library, University of California. *Catalog of Printed Books*. Third Supplement. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. Publisher, 70 Lincoln St., Boston, Mass. 02111. \$795.00.

———. *The Plate of Brass Reexamined: A Supplementary Report*. Berkeley: The Bancroft Library, University of California, 1979. 17 pp.

Bleyhl, Norris A. (compiler). *Some Newspaper References Concerning Indians and Indian-White Relationships in Northeastern California Chiefly between 1850 and 1920*. Chico: Northeastern California Regional Programs, 1979. Publisher, California State University, Chico 95927.

Brown, Millard (editor). *Trinity 1978*. Weaverville: Trinity County Historical Society, 1979. Publisher, P.O. Box 333, Weaverville 96093. \$2.25.

Cook, Sherburne F. and Woodrow Borah. *Essays in Population History: Mexico and California*. Vol. III. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. 346 pp. \$20.00.

Davidson, Harold G. *The Lost Works of Edward Borein*. Santa Barbara: by the author, 1979. 268 pp. Author, 4573 Nueces Drive, Santa Barbara 93110. \$25.00.

DeLong, Harriet Tracy. *Schoolm'am, Stone Lagoon, California, 1903-04*. Bainbridge Island, Wa.: by the author, 1979. 77 pp.

Author, 11099 Battle Pt. Dr. NE, Bainbridge Island, Wa. 98110. \$5.75.

Demoro, Harre W. *Southern Pacific Bay Area Steam*. Burlingame: Chatham Publishing Company, 1979. 144 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 283, Burlingame 94010. \$19.95.

Elias, Sol P. *Stories of Stanislaus County* (facsimile edition). Modesto: McHenry Museum, 1979. Publisher, 1402 I Street, Modesto 95354. \$8.00.

Etulian, Richard (editor). *Jack London on the Road*. Logan: Utah State University Press, 1979. Publisher, UMC 05 Logan, Utah 84322. \$7.50 (cloth); \$4.50 (paper).

Gleeson, Charles J. *Outpost on Poverty Flat*. Central Valley: Books, 1979. 129 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 1396, Central Valley 96019. \$6.85.

Hamm, Edward. *When Fresno Rode the Rails*. Glendale: Interurbans, 1979. 80 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 6444, Glendale 91205. \$9.50.

Hanna, Warren L. *Lost Harbor: The Controversy over Drake's California Anchorage*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. 476 pp. \$25.00.

Heizer, Robert F. (editor). *Federal Concern about Conditions of California Indians, 1853-1913: Eight Documents*. Socorro: Ballena Press, 1979. Publisher, P.O. Box 1366, Socorro, New Mexico 87801. \$7.95.

——— and Theodora Kroeber. *Ishi, Last Yahi: A Documentary History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. 250 pp. \$17.50.

Herron, Don. *Echoes from the Vaults of Yoh-Vombis. A Compendium of the Life of George F. Hass*. San Francisco: by the author, 1979. 56 pp. Author, 537 Jones St., No. 9270, San Francisco 94102. \$3.75.

Howard, Donald M. *Big Sur's Lost Tribe*. Carmel: Monterey County Archaeological Society, 1979. Publisher, P.O. Box 4606, Carmel 93921. \$7.95.

Huntington Library. *Guide to American Historical Manuscripts in the Huntington Library*. San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1979. 442 pp. Publisher, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino 91108. \$25.00.

Jenkins, Olaf P. *The Great Watershed of California*. Monterey: Angel Press, 1978. 41 pp.

Check List

- Author, P.O. Box 479, Pacific Grove 93950. \$4.00.
- Kahrl, William (Project Director). *The California Water Atlas*. Los Altos: William Kaufmann, Inc., 1979. 124 pp. Publisher, One First Street, Los Altos 94022. \$37.50.
- Koch, Margaret. *Santa Cruz County, Parade of the Past*. Fresno: Valley Publishers, 1979. 264 pp. Publisher, 8 E. Olive Ave., Fresno 93727. \$14.95.
- McWilliams, Carey. *The Education of Carey McWilliams*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979. 363 pp. \$11.95.
- Miller, Virginia P. *Ukomno'm: The Yuki Indians of Northern California*. Socorro: Ballena Press, 1979. 108 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 1366, Socorro, New Mexico 87801. \$6.95.
- Nordland, Ole J. *Coachella Valley's Golden Years* (revised edition). Coachella: Coachella Valley County Water District, 1978. 120 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 1058, Coachella 92236. \$2.50.
- O'Neil, Paul. *The End and the Myth. The Old West*. Alexandria: Time-Life Books, 1979. 240 pp. \$10.00.
- Rather, Lois. *Lotta's Fountain*. Oakland: The Rather Press, 1979. 99 pp. Publisher, 3200 Guido St., Oakland 94602. \$20.00.
- Robinson, Michael C. *Water for the West: The Bureau of Reclamation, 1902-1977*. Chicago: Public Works Historical Society, 1979. 117 pp. Publisher, 1313 East 60th St., Chicago, Illinois 60637. \$6.00.
- Sleeper, Jim. *Portrait from the Past . . . A Historical Profile of Orange County's Old County Courthouse*. Trabuco Canyon: California Classics, 1979. 32 pp. Orange County Historical Society, 2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana 92706.
- Spencer-Hancock, Diane. *Fort Ross: Indians-Russians-Americans. An Interpretive Guidebook to Fort Ross*. Jenner: Fort Ross Interpretive Association, 1978. Publisher, 19005 Coast Highway 1, Jenner 95450. \$2.50.
- Stanton, Jeffrey. *Venice, California, 1904-1930*. Venice: ARS Publications, 1978. Publisher, 3710 Pacific Ave., #16, Venice 90291. \$9.95 (cloth); \$4.95 (paper).
- Tarleton, Frank L. *Some Strike It Rich: Memories and Tales of a Native Son of California*. Hicksville, N.Y.: Exposition Press, 1979. 244 pp. Publisher, 900 So. Oyster Bay Rd., Hicksville, N.Y. 11801. \$7.50.
- Tassing, A. G. *Comanche, the Recalcitrant Mule*. Ukiah: Mendocino County Historical Society, 1978. 29 pp. Publisher, 603 W. Perkins Street, Ukiah 95482.
- Thomas, Robert C. *Drake at Olompo-Ali*. San Francisco: A-Pala Press, 1979. 89 pp. Publisher, 1790 26th Ave., San Francisco 94122. (no price listed).
- Tinkham, George Henry. *History of Stanislaus County with Biographical Sketches* (facsimile edition). Modesto: McHenry Museum, 1979. Publisher, 1402 I Street, Modesto 95354. \$37.50.
- Wallace, William J. and Edith Wallace. *Desert Foragers and Hunters: Indians of the Death Valley Region*. Ramona: Acoma Books, 1979. 44 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 4, Ramona 92065. \$3.25.
- Weber, Francis J. *California Catholicity*. Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop, 1979. 207 pp. Publisher, 535 North Larchmont Blvd., Los Angeles 90004. \$13.00.
- Wild, Peter. *Pioneer Conservationists of Western America*. Missoula, Montana: Mountain Press, 1979. 246 pp. \$12.95.
- Wishart, David J. *The Fur Trade of the American West, 1807-1840*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979. 240 pp. Publisher, 901 North 17th Street, Lincoln, Neb. 68588. \$14.50.
- Woods, Richard D. and Grace Alvarez-Altman. *Spanish Surnames in Southwestern United States: A Dictionary*. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1979. 149 pp. Publisher, 70 Lincoln St., Boston, Mass. 02111. \$18.00.
- Vandenhoff, Anne. *Edward Dickson Baker*. Auburn: Pony Express Printers, 1979. 84 pp. Author, P.O. Box 965, Auburn 95603. \$6.00.
- . *School in Summer*. Auburn: Pony Express Printers, 1979. 52 pp. \$3.50.
- Vickery, Oliver. *Harbor Heritage: Tales of the Harbor Area of Los Angeles*. Lomita: Morgan Press, 1979. Publisher, P.O. Box 456, Lomita 90717. \$10.95.

I AM CLAUDE GARAMOND

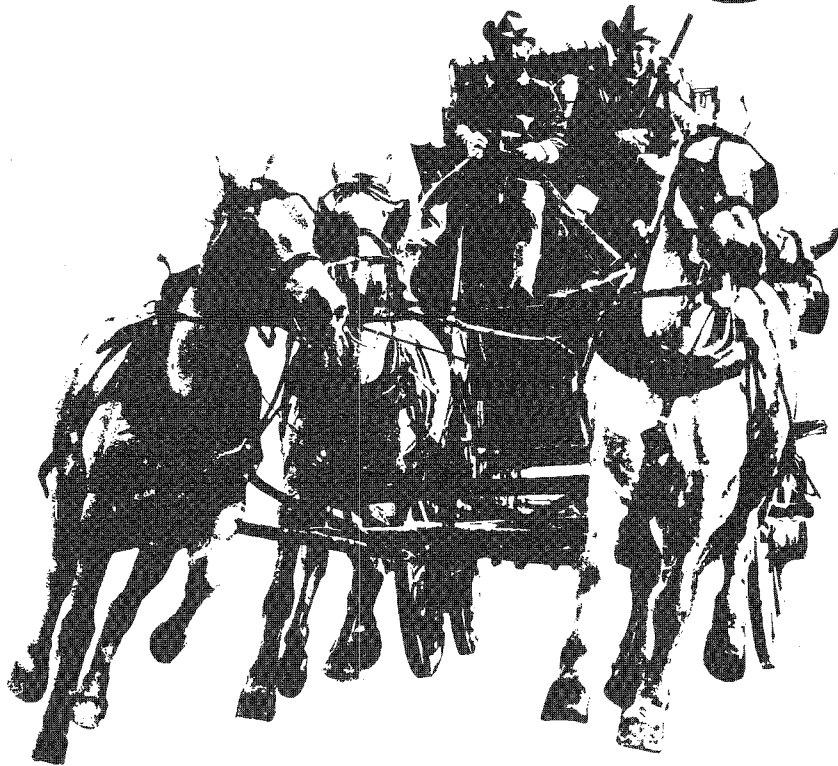
It is strange to me that my reputation, after twenty-score long years and more, should be for things I did not do, while those I did are almost lost in obscurity. I was a punch cutter, certainly the first in France and probably the first in the whole known world of my time, who established the business of designing types and cutting punches independent from a printing business. When I say I was a punch cutter I mean that by hand, I engraved punches in steel for each letter of the alphabet. These were used for making impressions into bronze matrices which, in turn, were employed to cast type. I had none of the fine, highfalutin punch cutting machines to make this work easy. I designed and cut all the punches for the Royal Greek types, copying the manuscripts of that clever Greek calligrapher, one Angelos Vergetios. I made these Royal Greek types for Robert Estienne who, at the time, was the King's Printer of France. As I recall it, the first size was completed in 1544. These Greek types were considered of such importance that all printers who used them were entitled to designate their work by a distinctive printer's mark, the device of a curious serpent and a vine entwined around a staff. You know me for the Garamond Romans and Italics. 'Tis true I designed Romans and Italics, several of them. Some may say I copied the forms of Aldus. Whether I did or not I set a new



style of Roman types in my France and the continent. My types were copied by the Dutch and it is claimed that William Caslon in 1722 was influenced in his designing by the Dutch punch cutters who had copied my style. In your day you have had a renaissance of Garamond or Garamont types. They have sprung up verily like mushrooms all over the 20th Century world. Few, if any, of these are copies of my Roman and Italic types. Your "Garamonts" are based upon the *Caractères de l'Université*, the original punches of which are still carefully guarded in that great printing establishment, the *Imprimerie Nationale* in Paris. These punches were cut by a fellow named Jannon. However, I am not concerned at the turn history has taken and forsooth I am reasonably flattered. I was the punch cutter *ad astra* of my time. 'Twas I who feathered the nests of publishers everywhere and brought honey to their hives. Printing craftsmen in my time knew my work so well that they named a size of type for me, long before you had your point system to designate all type sizes. After that I could die content as a pauper. Which I did. I thank *Mackenzie-Harris Corp.*, that great typographic concern of Yerba Buena, Alta California (now known as *San Francisco, California*) for affording me this opportunity of correcting some inaccuracies which have crept into recorded history through the years.

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